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# Our International Position

The events of the summer of 1925 give food for serious thought in respect to our International position.

The most important events of this summer consist in:

(1) Movement in China;

(2) The attempts of British Conservatives to bring about a rupture between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. and form a coalition of states against the U.S.S.R.

(3) Mass visits of European workers' delegations to the U.S.S.R.

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I. **The events in China** have completely justified what Lenin wrote on the Eastern question in the article containing his political bequest.

The events in China were bound to destroy the balance of power, or rather semi-balance, which had been established in the international arena in recent times. The events in China have such tremendous significance that their consequences will affect the entire international balance of power still more in the future.

The attempts of the imperialists to charge the Soviet Union with responsibility for the movement in China are, of course, unfounded. But these imperialist gentlemen nevertheless employ a certain logic in their attacks. The **very existence** of the Soviet Union is already propaganda against imperialism in the East. Even the first Russian Revolution of 1905 which did not destroy but only partially smashed Tsarism had a gigantic effect in arousing the East.

The leaders of British imperialism are learning from the Chinese "lessons" of May-June. One of the immediate results of the Chinese events may be observed in the concessions of British imperialism to the bourgeois upper strata in India. It sometimes happens, however, that concessions made to the upper classes result in making the masses more exacting. We do not doubt that this will also happen in India.

## COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The Chinese movement in 1925 was not absolutely victorious. But everything goes to show that this movement has become more extensive and more profound and that its experiences will now be "digested" by the masses of the Chinese people and the entire East, thus preparing events on a still larger scale.

Some "realists" resembling liquidators just like two peas suggest that the U.S.S.R. should take up a position of "neutrality" with regard to the National Movement in the East, and steer a course towards "Western orientation." These wise heads have not the least conception that: (1) their advice means the complete liquidation of Leninism in so far as such a "policy" implies a denial of the tactics of **world** revolution; (2) from the point of view of "Western" imperialists, towards whom it is suggested our "orientation" should veer we ourselves (i.e., the U.S.S.R.) are the "East"—only much more "dangerous" than China and (3) there can be no "neutrality" on such questions as our attitude towards the movement of hundreds of millions of people in the East, even if we wanted it. A "Western" orientation interpreted in such a liquidatorist manner would in reality not mean neutrality with regard to the East, but would mean going over to the side of Western imperialists **against** the East; which would be utilised by the "Western" imperialists for strangling the East and U.S.S.R. in succession.

The U.S.S.R. is the main hope that lends courage to the East. The great revolution, which has transformed Russia from a prison of nations into a fraternal family of peoples with equal rights, is bound to serve as a guiding light for the enslaved masses of the entire East. Therein lies the source of the tremendous strength of the U.S.S.R. on the international arena, but therein also lies a stimulus for the forces of imperialism to fall upon the U.S.S.R. as early as possible.

2. The action of the British Conservatives this summer signified **an open attempt at rupture, an open preparation for war against the Soviet Union.**

Why are the British Conservative gentlemen in such a hurry?

Business with foreign loans is dull. But it has now already been proved that the U.S.S.R. will be able to get on quite all right at a pinch without these loans. The Soviet



Government made considerable concessions in order to receive 200-300 million gold roubles from "comrade" MacDonald when he was still Premier. Nothing came of this. But the Soviet Government, to make up for this, obtained a loan in 1925 from "comrade" harvest under much more favourable conditions. During the next budget year the Soviet Government will invest capital in industry amounting to 970 million roubles out of its own resources. It is true that 600 millions of this sum have been allotted for the restoration of old sections of fixed capital, and that only 300 millions are to be devoted to new work. But nevertheless this is a tremendous step forward. The economic power of the Soviet Union is capable of development also without foreign loans. And who knows but that this very economic growth may lead to foreign loans being granted in one form or another in future years.

There is no doubt that international imperialism is realising more and more the decisive portent of the next few years. They realise that in five years time the economic position of the U.S.S.R. will have become so strong, the sympathy of the toiling masses towards the U.S.S.R. will become so unbounded, and the Socialist Union will become so stabilised and reinforced in all respects that it will be absolutely ridiculous even to talk about any kind of war against the Soviet Union. At the present moment the events in the East are rendering matters still more acute, and more threatening for the stronghold of British imperialism. The leaders of the imperialist bourgeoisie are saying to themselves: "Now, or a little later, or never."

The vanguard of the international proletariat must understand this in order to see whence the danger is coming in future years. Only the leaders of the Second International who adorn themselves with the livery of imperialist lackeys with ever-increasing satisfaction are unable to see whence the real danger of a new war is coming, at the present stage of development.

This year the British Conservatives' campaign did not succeed.

What was the real cause of their failure?

It must first of all be noted that British imperialism did not decide to act at its own risk, but made its activities depend upon the success of a deal with a number of other imperialist powers. British imperialism understands that

the dispute between the proletarian revolution and imperialism cannot be settled within the confines of one country, that imperialist England and the Soviet Union measure forces, **but will be fought out on an international scale.**

British imperialism is preparing an **international** imperialist coalition against the U.S.S.R., is preparing the isolation of the Soviet Union. The old school of British diplomacy knew the art of proceeding with great patience and prudence when it was preparing the isolation of one or other of its rivals. British diplomacy has at times been known to spend 20-30 years in preparing an "operation." But now things are different, British imperialism knows very well that the Soviet Union will allow it such a period of 10-20 years with pleasure, for in 10-20 years time the correlation of forces on the international arena will change so much to the advantage of the Union of Soviet Republics, to the advantage of the international proletariat that it will be simply absurd even to talk about a war against the U.S.S.R. That is the reason why this year British imperialism endeavoured to solve this problem in 10-20 **weeks**. This is the key to a certain extent to British diplomacy, coming, so to speak, out "into the street." Everything was done with unusual frankness. It was quite openly written in influential British newspapers that British banks would give certain loans to Germany if the latter completely supported the British plans against the Soviet Union. What could be more frank?

However, how did this open campaign of the British imperialists in the summer of 1925 finish?

All the imperialist powers who had been invited by British imperialism to enter an open alliance for an attack against the U.S.S.R. declined this honour for the time being. French imperialism was too busy with **its own** difficulties—the war in Morocco, the rising in Syria and financial obligations. Japanese imperialism is still experiencing too acutely the results of the recent earthquake and fears complications with awakening China so near her frontiers. American imperialism is itself trying to "make a bit" out of the growing movement in the British colonies and semi-colonies. And, most important of all, not a single bourgeois country dare attempt to mobilise a large army against the Soviet Union, without tremendous risk, without the risk of losing its head, and not a single government can even risk an open blockade of the U.S.S.R. without serious political complications.



British diplomacy induced the British king to shower particular kindnesses to the Foreign Minister of such a country as —Latvia. Even a piece of string comes in useful in a big shop! When it is a question of a “holy” war against the Soviet system, “proud” British diplomacy was not even squeamish at this. However, for the time being, even the “powerful” support of the Lettish Foreign Minister has not helped “tender” British diplomacy to realise its aggressive plans against the U.S.S.R.

That is why we became witnesses of the unusual events in the summer of 1925. British imperialism, under the eyes of the whole world invited France, Japan, America (and certain smaller powers) to form an alliance for an attack against the U.S.S.R. and in the eyes of the whole world the hand of British imperialism hung in the air. Everyone who was appealed to by British imperialism replied very politely: they were all, of course, ready in more “favourable” circumstances to renew negotiations and set about the U.S.S.R. but “for the time being” they were all compelled to “abstain.”

It is just this circumstance (plus, of course, the humour of the British working class) that has for the time being compelled British imperialism not only to renounce its open plan of intervention, but even the plan for a diplomatic rupture with the U.S.S.R. This, of course, does not mean **that the plan has been renounced once and for all**, but only “until a more appropriate time.” “Western” imperialism is a stubborn and persistent enemy. Attempts of this kind will be repeated **scores and scores of times** and at the slightest sign of any weakness they will become a reality.

3. **Mass workers’ delegations to the U.S.S.R.** are of enormous significance both from the point of view of the general interests of the Labour Movement and also from the standpoint of struggle, in particular against the approaching danger of new wars. We may take as an established fact that both among considerable circles of Social-Democratic and of non-party workers, the consciousness of the danger of new wars is growing. The working class masses of Europe and America are beginning to feel by their proletarian instinct that this danger is once again becoming a real one. There is no doubt but that this danger will have the effect of rallying the ranks of the international proletariat in the near future, and that the consciousness of this danger assists in the formation of a united working class front. The delegations of Social-Democracy and non-party

workers want to be convinced with their own eyes of what is really happening in the Soviet Union and if we are really successfully building Socialism here. Sympathy for and faith in the U.S.S.R. is growing on the part of those sections of the proletariat who have up to now been filled with scepticism and whom the leaders of the Second International had infected and instilled with a mistrust in Communism. The consciousness is also growing that the partial "stabilisation" of capitalism will **inevitably lead to a new imperialist war if the workers of the world will not unite.**

In the summer of 1925 imperialism was working with all its strength for the formation of a **united black front**, to form a coalition against the U.S.S.R. At the same time the most advanced workers of the entire world were bent on rallying the ranks of the workers with the greatest possible haste and forming a **united red front** in defence of peace, for a struggle against war, and in support of the first victorious proletarian revolution.

Neither one nor the other of these united fronts has as yet been finally consolidated. But there is no doubt that our Red united front is being built up (Scarborough) and is being formed more rapidly and more successfully than the united front of black reaction. And what is most important still is the fact that the dynamics of this process are such that every step towards the consolidation of the black united front increases the dangers of wars and at the same time on the other hand, mechanically strengthens the united red front of millions of the masses against a new imperialist slaughter. What is more, every step towards the consolidation of the Red united front almost inevitably increases the uncertainty, and in certain cases the conflicts within the imperialist camp. Capitalism would not be capitalism if dissensions, competition and struggle were to cease **within** their own camp. Socialism would not be Socialism, if it did not forge the solidarity of the international working class out of all these obstacles and consolidate the ranks of the many millions of the working masses in opposition to the handful of imperialists. The victory of the united front of the Reds over the united front of the Black Hundreds—even if the latter became completely consolidated—is ultimately inevitable and beyond all question.

The campaign for International Trade Union Unity acquires universal historic significance thus viewed. In the first place there is the rapprochement between the Soviet Unions and the British Trade Unions. The united front

tactics, the basis of which are defined at the Third Comintern Congress are only now beginning to bear real fruits. The entire international situation is developing in such a manner that the united front tactics will inevitably gain a still greater attractive force for the masses of workers at large.

The focus of the international Labour Movement during the coming period, and the focus of the united front tactics will comprise:

- (1) The struggle against the dangers of new wars;
- (2) Support of Socialist construction of the U.S.S.R.;
- (3) Struggle for the unity of the International Trade Union Movement;
- (4) Support of the national-revolutionary movements in the East;
- (5) Rapprochement between the workers and those sections of the peasantry who themselves have grounds for fearing new wars and who are themselves suffering under the yoke of the economic policy of imperialism.\*

The following conclusions may be deduced from the foregoing:

1. The growth of the economic power of the U.S.S.R. and in particular its foreign trade, the Concessions policy (this policy is now finding real expression for the first time by virtue of the economic regeneration of the country) are on the whole working against war. But the at same time, this very economic stabilisation of the U.S.S.R. of which the entire international proletariat is so proud is "teasing" international imperialism and making it frightened of "losing the opportunity" for a decisive blow against growing Socialism. British imperialism, and in fact world imperialism are endeavouring **a hundred times more to accomplish what they were unable to do in the summer of 1925.** The Soviet Union must be strong not only in an economic respect, but also in a military sense. Not only is this of moment for the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. but for the toilers of the whole world.

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\* Tax burdens in all bourgeois countries without exception have increased to an unprecedented degree; in Italy by 28 per cent. as compared with the pre-war sum assessed and by 15 per cent. per inhabitant; in France by 60 per cent. in comparison with pre-war assessment; in the United States of America threefold; in England more than four times the pre-war taxation; and in neutral countries three-fold.



2. The foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. and in particular its policy in the East must remain just as it was in Lenin's time. The policy of "neutrality" with regard to the national liberation movement in the East, the policy of a "Western orientation," i.e., the policy of compromise with imperialism against the East would be treachery to the Russian and international revolution.

3. The tactics of the United Front are entering on a new and decisive stage. Communists should be able to bring about a rapprochement with Social-Democratic and non-Party workers, at any cost on the basis of a struggle; (a) against the dangers of new wars, (b) for International Trade Union Unity. **The struggle for an international Red workers (and afterwards workers and peasants) front is the task of tasks for Communists throughout the whole world.**

4. The struggle against the dangers of new wars should be the Alpha and Omega of the entire work of the Communist International. The Comintern, an offspring of the war makes one of its first tasks that of saving humanity from new imperialist wars. In Lenin's famous letter of 1922 (Instruction to our delegation at the International Peace Congress' in Hague) Vladimir Ilyitch explained in detail just why and just how the struggle against a new imperialist war should be prepared **long before this war breaks out**, should be prepared **now**. Workers of the whole world, remember the first imperialist war!—says the Constitution of the Comintern; Workers of the world, remember that the second imperialist war is approaching—said Lenin in the above-mentioned letter. The contents of this letter represent one of the most important behests of Leninism. And one of the most important tasks of the Comintern is to strew the road with Leninist thoughts as expressed in this letter throughout the widest masses of the world's toilers. The translation of these thoughts into deeds will signify the rescue of humanity from a new and yet more devastating imperialist slaughter.

G. ZINOVIEV.

# The Guarantee Pact

**A**T the time of writing this article the final results of the Locarno Conference are not yet known. Press reports aver that an agreement has been reached on the so-called Rhine Guarantee Pact and on the Arbitration Agreement between Germany on the one hand and France and Belgium on the other; still as the other task of the conference—the conclusion of arbitration treaties between Germany on the one hand, and Poland and Czecho-Slovakia on the other, with the participation of France as guarantee for these two treaties—represented prior to the Locarno Conference the stumbling block of all negotiations, we may safely say that the fate of the entire conference still hangs fire. France considers, at any rate, as far as may be gathered from the official and semi-official declarations, that the question of her participation as a guarantee in the arbitration treaties of Germany with Czecho-Slovakia and Poland is a condition for her signing the Rhine Pact and the Arbitration Treaty between Germany and France. However, even if an agreement is not come to now at Locarno, we consider that this will only mean a postponement. In the near future negotiations will be recommenced, and sooner or later the diplomatic programme drawn up by the allies for bringing Germany into the League of Nations and for a new International grouping will be realised. The fact alone that it was Germany herself who was the formal initiator of the present negotiations is a guarantee for this. The first proposal on the part of Germany in this direction was made in December, 1922, by the Cuno Government and was repeated during the present year on February 9th in a memorandum presented to the French Government by the German ambassador in Paris, von Hosch. It is true that the suspicion was expressed that Germany, although the initiator of the Guarantee Pact was at the same time not a supporter of it, and that her proposal should only be considered as a tactical step for the isolation of France. However, the German government is not so foolish as not to understand that if in making such a proposal it did not intend carrying it to the conclusion, Germany would find herself in a still more isolated position than previously after the revelation of the game.

The significance of the Pact or rather Pacts which are about to be or perhaps have been already concluded is tremendous. It determines the objective historical situation. No matter what the separate specific convictions of each State open or secret, expressed in notes, in parliamentary speeches or in the press, it should be clear for all of us that the Guarantee Pact is a new stage in the political reinforcement of international capital, and that by virtue of the objective historical conditions in the approaching proletarian revolution, it is primarily a means of struggle against the proletarian revolutionary movement, against the Communist Party and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in particular. It is a new kind of Holy Alliance in which instead of a preamble where the autocrats of Europe swear to preserve Christian morals and monarchistic legitimacy in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, there is an adjuration about the stabilisation of Europe. In substance, both the holy alliance and the new Western grouping pursue the same counter-revolutionary aim, i.e., to forestall the coming revolution. When Germany and France who for hundreds of years have waged frequent bloody wars for the domination of the Rhine, who consider themselves "hereditary enemies" who have never voluntarily renounced their pretensions on Alsace-Lorraine, which has passed continually from hand to hand when these two countries are now fraternising, this means that there is something brewing. This in particular is characteristic of German policy. There is no doubt that the German Government and German public opinion had to bring great pressure to bear in order to declare at this time without wars or compulsion that henceforth and for evermore all pretensions will be renounced to the Western territory on the other side of the frontier established by the odious Versailles Congress. All the more so as this took place at a time of peace when her economic position has on the whole become strengthened, and when her foreign political situation has improved, and the French troops have evacuated the Ruhr. Everyone remembers that Germany even though smashed, conquered and surrounded by victorious French troops ready to advance on Berlin, even though being absolutely isolated diplomatically, did not agree to sign the Versailles Treaty and that her first delegation headed by Brockdorff Rantzau returned to Berlin. A second delegation had to be sent. Germany wanted to emphasise by this that she only yielded to force and that she would never concede to the territorial amputations being enforced.

What could have made the German Government, comprised of nationalists and monarchists, under the presidency



of Marshal von Hindenburg commit an act which, from the national standpoint, is the most shameful act in German history? This thing, which Germany did not do even when she was almost completely overrun by the troops of Napoleon before whom all Europe was trembling, she has nevertheless committed in face of the Third Republic which is in all respects in no enviable position. This sudden change in German psychology is not merely to be explained away by the difficulties of an economic or political nature now being encountered. It can only be explained by the profound changes taking place in the re-grouping of social forces in Germany itself. Instead of the former "Deutschland über alles" German nationalism is now singing the ditty "The Power of Capital Before All." In any case it is only on the basis of this historic actuality that one can understand the events now taking place. All the remaining factors—economic and political—only strengthen the action of this basic fact.

We will return to this again when we get down to the analysis of the internal and foreign relations of the main group of States participating in the present negotiations. But here we should remark that the very same consideration of a social-conservative nature undoubtedly also plays a decisive role in the relations both of France and Great Britain to the Rhine Guarantee Treaty. Then we will see what other factors appertaining to each State separately—side by side with this basic factor—also play their own role in the present negotiations. We will also deal with the political and economic consequences for Europe resulting from the Pact. Finally, we will endeavour to examine to what extent the capitalist governments are condemned to make miscalculations in advance, in their class reckonings. Calculations which are made without the host or even against the host, i.e., against the proletariat, after a certain time become simply what we formerly called under Military Communism, "Book-keeping operations"—with entries from one account to another, as if this meant we were increasing the quantity of real values.

In what way did the negotiations on the Rhine Pact arise? We have already pointed out that as far back as December, 1922, the Cuno Government made its first formal offer; this was repeated in February of the present year. The Cuno offer is only of retrospective historical interest, as the present negotiations only started after the present German Government had repeated its offer.

The memorandum of the German Ambassador in Paris, von Hosch, was a short one. He only presented the question in its general form. But already here certain important aspects of principle were alluded to, certain general lines, which in the subsequent negotiations were already extended. Germany proposed the conclusion of a Guarantee Pact between the States interested in the Rhine frontier—between Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany. Altogether they take upon themselves the solemn obligation with regard to the U.S.A. Government that during a definite period, which should be established by the latter, they will not fight among themselves. During this period the contracting States undertake strictly to preserve the status quo of the Rhine frontier. From this the conclusion arises that if one of the signatories of the Guarantee Pact desires to change the Rhine frontier, all the remaining signatories are obliged to prevent this—even by having recourse to arms. Besides this, the contracting parties undertake to put into force the demilitarisation of the Rhineland province envisaged in pp. 42 and 43 of the Versailles Treaty, and they do not merely undertake to **carry out** this demilitarisation, but also to **preserve it**. At the same time the German Government expressed the opinion that this Guarantee Pact might become the basis for the conclusion of a Guarantee Protocol between all States—similar to the one which was accepted last year at the Autumn session of the League of Nations. In a short note, of but a few lines, Herriot informed the German Government that his memorandum had been accepted and considered by the French Government, but that the latter reserved to itself the right to reply only after it has come to agreement on this question with its allies—"So that a regime of safety may be established within the framework of the Versailles Treaty."

In these two documents there are already two main lines apparent upon which the struggle will be conducted. Whereas in the German note the Versailles Treaty is only alluded to in the section which envisages the demilitarisation of the Rhineland district, i.e., the point, the consistent realisation of which would make it difficult for France to apply military force to Germany, the French Government, on the contrary, from the very first declares that the Versailles Treaty is the foundation upon which all subsequent Guarantee Pacts arbitration treaties and so forth should be based. The aim pursued by the French Government is not to weaken the Versailles Treaty but to strengthen it. On May 12 the French Government submitted to the British Government through

its Ambassador in London, the draft of a reply which the French Government proposed to send to Germany. On May 19th Chamberlain, after the first "rapid acquaintance," as the British note has it, with the French draft reply, announced that the British Government deemed it necessary to demand from the French Government further explanations on various points on the French draft reply. After a week a new French memorandum is received in which Briand replies to the British questions. On May 29th a reply is received from the British Government which expounds the British point of view in connection with the French draft reply. The correspondence exchanging the opinions of these two governments continues, and only on July 16th was the note of reply of the French Government sent to the German Government re its first proposal of February 9th. It stands to reason that during this time an analogous concurrence of opinions took place between the French Government and the Belgian Guarantee Pact, and also between the French Government and its allies of the Little Entente—Poland and Czecho-Slovakia in particular. In its final reply the French Government acted in a dual manner; it made a part of its proposals on behalf of the allies, i.e., on behalf of Great Britain, Italy and Belgium, and the other part on its own behalf. This circumstance explains the differences that arose between Great Britain and France in the understanding of the extent of the obligations which each of these States agreed to shoulder. It is important to trace what really were these differences around which the British and French Governments continued their dispute for almost one month and a half. We must return to the first draft reply of the French Government.

As we have already pointed out the French Government already in its first formal short reply asserted that the basis for all subsequent negotiations was the Versailles Treaty. All German proposals are only considered as "further guarantees of safety within the framework of the Versailles Treaty." This tendency runs like a red thread throughout the entire French project. Therefore, the French Government in the first place expresses perplexity that in the German memorandum there is only a casual reference to the League of Nations. At the same time France considers that the entry of Germany into the League of Nations is one of the essential conditions for the conclusion of the Rhine Guarantee Pact. In the second point in its reply, the French Government recalls that the new Safety Guarantees should not only not be accompanied by any revision whatsoever of the existing treaties, but that on the contrary, they should



be formulated in such a way that in their practical application they will not lead to the modification or infringement of the existing treaties, and in particular will not deprive the allies of the right—which they had hitherto—to resist any non-observance of these treaties, even in cases where these decisions do not directly affect them.

If we decipher this point in the French reply, we see that France, in spite of the Guarantee Pact, reserves itself the right, in the event of Germany disregarding the decisions of the Versailles Treaty, of using force against her and, among other things, of sending troops to occupy the demilitarised Rhine, not only if the treaty will not be observed with regard to her, but if it be infringed even in respect to a third party, i.e., the Poles and Czecho-Slovaks. France emphasises her right to occupy the Rhine province, also in a special point of her reply. She makes two further observations: firstly, concerning the fact that Belgium, as a contracting party, is not mentioned in the German project and secondly, points out the temporary nature of the Guarantee Pact proposed by Germany. We should here observe that even Cuno proposed the conclusion of a 30-years pact. In the new German proposals, although no definite period was alluded to, the pact is also proposed as a temporary one. Subsequently, Germany abandoned this point of view and agreed that the Pact be concluded "for ever." As far as Belgium is concerned, the German Government while the French and British Governments were still exchanging opinions, hastened to excuse itself for its "forgetfulness"; but the press, which does not believe in the forgetfulness of diplomats, considered that Germany at first wanted to try and conserve "freedom of action" with regard to Belgium.

Let us once more turn to the French reply. The German Government, in its proposals re the conclusion of arbitration treaties with France and with other States participating in the Rhine Guarantee Pact, pointed out that these arbitration treaties should be extended to all juridical and political conflicts. The French Government for its part, observed that they should be extended to all conflicts without exception (except, of course, those arising from the non-observance of the Versailles Treaty and in connection with which France reserved the right to apply compulsory measures even including occupation of the Rhineland territory). In this manner "the arbitration treaties," which bind Germany hand and foot, are obligatory for France only in the sphere of problems which do not affect the Versailles Treaty. Besides this, France puts forward the proposal that the observ-

ance of these arbitration treaties be placed under the individual or joint guarantees of the States which have signed the Rhine Guarantee Pact. This means that France, for instance, will guarantee the fulfilment of the arbitration treaty concluded between Germany and Belgium and Great Britain will guarantee the arbitration treaty concluded between Germany and France, etc.—or they will all together guarantee the observance of all arbitration treaties.

Up to the present it has been a question of the arbitration treaties between States participating in the Rhine pact, i.e., France, Great Britain, Belgium, Italy and Germany. But the German Government in its note expressed agreement to conclude analogous arbitration treaties with all States desiring to do so. France accepted this German announcement, "with pleasure," but she did not limit herself to that; she snatched Germany's pacifist weapon out of her hands, in order to turn it against Germany herself. She did not rest content with merely registering the German offers, but turned this optional right of Germany into a categorical obligation on the part of Germany towards all States having signed the Versailles Treaty. All these circumstances—the entry into the League of Nations, the signing of the Guarantee Pact with the inclusion of Belgium, the signing of the arbitration treaties with both the Rhineland States and with all the other signatories of the Versailles Treaty, in so far, of course, as they themselves expressed this desire—represent for the French Government **one indivisible whole.**

Finally, the French Government announces that it "will be happy" if the American nation will agree to support these various treaties and thus participate "in the work of strengthening general peace and security." In the German proposal the participation of the United States is interpreted rather differently. Germany wanted to make of the United States a special kind of super arbitrator, which would settle all disputes cropping up between the contracting parties during the process of the practical application of the agreements signed by them. France, however, endeavoured to draw in the United States as a direct participator. Both these attempts are now only of retrospective historical interest, as the United States Government, on learning of the German proposals, hastened to announce that although sympathising with the attempts at the conclusion of the Guarantee Pact, it nevertheless refused itself to take part in same. We will see that although America did play a very active role in this business—some even say the main role—nevertheless

desiring to acquire the maximum of influence with the minimum of obligations, she preserved for herself full freedom of action. America prefers to rule Europe through others, remaining herself behind the scenes.

Now let us examine the substance of the British observations in regard to the French project. We will refer to the most important of these. The British Government is mainly anxious in clearly defining these obligations which it takes upon itself from those which France wishes to undertake. First of all, let us deal with the observances of a formal nature. How should the French project be viewed? As a reply which is given on behalf of the allies or on behalf of the French Government itself? The British Government wishes to find out from the French how to understand its expression: "Within the framework of the Versailles Treaty." It has no objection to the French Government considering the new Pact as strengthening the Versailles Treaty, but it expresses the fear that the proposal of the French Government might be understood in the sense that the allies were once more guaranteeing the fulfilment of the Versailles Treaty. In other words, Great Britain is ready to sign the new Pact, but untrammelled by the Versailles Treaty. Great Britain is not ready to give new guarantees with regard to the Versailles Treaty. The British Government expresses the same fears with regard to the attempts of the French Government to repeat in the new Pact the decision of the Versailles Treaty, which, according to the interpretation of the French Government, gives the latter the right to take action against Germany.

The British Government presents the French Government with another series of quibbling questions concerning the nature of the arbitration treaties, and also concerning the role which the League of Nations should play in all this business, which is mentioned in the French draft reply, but which in the practical application of the various arbitration treaties would appear not to play any role whatsoever, and thus this entire new system is a super-structure over the League of Nations itself.

On receipt of supplementary explanations from the French Government, the British Government expressed its viewpoint in a definite form. This amounted to the following: firstly, Great Britain intends participating as a guarantor in the new Treaties, in so far as this concerns the Eastern frontiers of Belgium and France (Western frontiers



of Germany) exclusively, where the sphere of British interests ends. "The main factor which the British Government has been guided by in studying the question under consideration, is that any new obligation which it undertakes, should be of a specific nature and be restricted to preserving the territorial status existing on the Western frontier of Germany. His Majesty's Government does not intend taking upon itself any measures whatsoever supplementary to those emanating from its having signed the League of Nations Pact and the Peace Treaties. On the other hand, it will be opportune to recall that in endeavouring to seek means for strengthening the situation in the West, His Majesty's Government has not itself raised this question and does not encourage others to raise the question of other decisions of the Peace Treaties which are the basis of the existing European public order. The British Government also asserts that on the other points also the plans of the French Government go much further than the intentions of the British Government, as for example, in the point on joint guarantees of the arbitration treaties, which Germany may conclude 'with States not participating in the Rhine Pact.'— (Re-translated from Russian.)

The British Government is sympathetic towards all such attempts, but "in view of the position of the British Empire on which lies a responsibility which extends throughout all parts of the world," it should avoid participating in combinations which specially interest the European continental States. Of course, this is the underlying reason also for the objection to the fact that the French Government makes the conclusion of the Rhine Pact dependent upon the conclusion of the arbitration treaties with Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. The arbitration treaties between the Rhine States are an exception, Great Britain herself also adhering to these and being also prepared to participate in their circular guarantees, deeming them to be logically the result of the Rhine Guarantee Pact. With regard to the entire nature of the new Pact, the British Government pictures this not only as in accordance with the spirit and the statutes of the League of Nations, but also as entering within the sphere of the League of Nations. In this manner the British Government frankly displayed the tendency to retain its freedom of action, which France wants to preserve for herself with regard to Germany.

In accordance with this viewpoint, the British Government introduced amendments into the French reply, in which it had to be emphasised which were the collective proposals of all the allies and which were the individual proposals of France herself.

We still have to consider what final form the French note acquired after the exchange of opinions between the French and the British Governments.

On the whole, France was able to overcome a large part of the British objections, and to retain its most important positions as marked out in her first draft reply. The very significant phrase that the new agreements are included within the "framework" of the Versailles Treaty, and represent "supplementary guarantees of security," remained in the preliminary part of the final text. The point concerning the conditions of the German entry into the League of Nations to which Great Britain, of course, did not object, also remained. The point according to which the new Security Guarantees could not in any case contain changes or infringements of the existing Peace Treaties, was retained also. In other words, France retained the right of applying measures of compulsion to Germany, in the event of her breaking the Versailles Treaty. As to whether the application of these measures will be conducted under the control of other guarantors of the Rhine Pact, or, as in 1923, whether France may occupy the Ruhr territory according to her individual will, about that no word is mentioned. France on her part interprets this point as allowing her to preserve her freedom of action.

(Both in many other treaties and in the present treaty, those points on which no agreement was reached are passed over in absolute silence). The point concerning the arbitration treaties between Germany on the one hand and France and Belgium on the other, have remained exactly as they were framed in the original French text. The observance of these treaties will be jointly guaranteed by all States signing the Rhine Guarantee Pact. It is only in this point that it is stated that the League of Nations will assume its role in the event of the arbitration treaties not being fulfilled. Thus with this it is once more emphasised that on the non-fulfilment of the Versailles Treaty the jurisdiction of the League of Nations is not recognised. In the original text there are only amendments on the question of the arbitration treaties which Germany will conclude with other States—Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, etc. France, on behalf of the allies, declared that the signing of these treaties is obligatory, but that they will not be under the joint guarantee of Great Britain and France. However, France individually reserves for herself the right of accepting such guarantees. In this manner, France, on this point, distinguishes the general

obligations for all allies from what she considers to be her own obligations towards Poland and Czecho-Slovakia.

The note of the French Government marks the revival of the Anglo-French alliance. The struggle which existed between France and England, and which became particularly acute after the French occupation of the Ruhr has now been settled, at any rate formally. France and Great Britain once more act unitedly on all essential questions. The British and French bourgeois press waxed triumphant. The formation of the united front was signalled by other acts. On January 15th of the present year the first period of five years provided by the Versailles Treaty for evacuating the Ruhr territory, which is to be cleared after three periods of five years, expired. The Cologne zone, occupied almost exclusively by British troops, should have been duly evacuated. Great Britain, however, desiring to retain the means for asserting pressure on Germany and to please France, did not withdraw her troops. The second fact arising from this united front was the despatch of a joint note to Germany on the question of disarmament. The Allies Control Commission in Berlin had already last year collected extensive material which is supposed to have revealed that secret armaments were in existence in Germany, i.e., that the conditions of the Versailles Treaty were not being fulfilled. But, for various reasons, a formal protest to the German Government was put off until such time as Great Britain and France saw eye to eye on the question of the Guarantee Pact. (It is true that rumours circulated in certain Berlin circles that the British had given the Germans due warning whenever the Control Commission intended conducting a search.)

The German reply to the French note followed on July 20th, 1925. Not only the tone, but the text also bore witness to the fact that Germany was making concessions. The majority of observations she made were more of a formal nature.

It had been supposed that Germany would connect the conclusion of the Guarantee Pact with the evacuation of the Cologne area and modification of the regime in the other Rhine provinces occupied by the allied troops. This demand which had been attributed to the German Government did not figure in its Note. Only in two places the German Government in general phrases restricted itself to expressing the hope that the conclusion of the Guarantee Pact would not reflect on the position of the occupied provinces and in particular the Rhine district. "The Pact cannot fail to

have influence" states the German Note, "on the position of the occupied provinces, and in general on all questions concerning occupation." Another general conception expressed in the note is that concerning the Versailles Treaty. Germany, while acknowledging the French assumption that the Pact should contain neither changes nor infringements of the Versailles Treaty, nevertheless expressed the opinion that "this will not mean that the possibility of applying the existing treaties at a given moment, and by means of friendly agreements, to those changes which might eventually take place in the general situation, is not excluded for all time. . . ."

The German objections refer also to another point. While not denying France's right to apply to her certain military measures, Germany considers, however, that such application of military measures arising out of the Versailles Treaty should not take place "without objective procedure being preliminarily resorted to." In other words, the arbitration court should previously establish as to whether Germany has really infringed the Versailles Treaty. Another objection on the part of Germany is that she is against France's proposal to participate as a guarantor in the arbitration treaties which Germany must sign with Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. In conclusion the German Note does not object to the German entry into the League of Nations, but repeats the reservations she has already made concerning the obligations for Germany arising from Article 16 of the League of Nations constitution.

It is well-known, according to this paragraph 16, that every State entering the League of Nations is obliged to take active participation in the punitive expeditions or even wars which the League of Nations may undertake against "guilty" States. Alluding to the fact that Germany was practically speaking, completely disarmed and in a position of inequality compared with other members of the League of Nations, the German Government endeavoured to reject such obligations. It expressed the fear that Germany might become a theatre of war between Poland and the Soviet Union, wherein France would desire to send her troops at once to assist Poland, which troops could only pass through German territory. In making this reservation with regard to paragraph 16, Germany, of course, had not the interests of Soviet Russia in view, but her own interests, for it is, above all, undesirable for Germany herself that Poland should be strengthened and, furthermore, what is most important of all, if French troops once more occupy



German territory, it is not known whether they would ever go back again, or if they did, after what period!

We will not refer in detail to the subsequent stages of the negotiations. A new French reply was sent to the German note, in which the French Government, expressing its satisfaction with regard to the "pacifist" spirit which permeated the German note, retained her old positions. At the same time, the French Government made an offer to the German Government to refer the question to a Commission of Experts meeting in London for further consideration. After the work of the Commission of Experts, a conference should have been summoned at which the Ministers of the countries interested would negotiate concerning the disagreement yet existing between the allies and Germany. In this manner Germany eventually got to Locarno.

Already at this stage of the negotiations, the question arose as to who had been deceiving whom. It would be erroneous to judge the gains or losses of each of the States participating in these negotiations, by the algebraic formulæ which the articles of these treaties represent. Although in general they may give some idea as to the gains and losses, they only acquire their real significance if we regard them in connection with the objectives which each of these States is aiming at, and about which the treaties, of course, do not contain a word, and if we regard them in accordance with the modifications which they will bring to the international situation. For instance, the fact that Germany gives France a guarantee concerning the observance of the existing Rhine frontiers for all time, while she only concludes arbitration treaties with Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, already creates a state of inequality between France and her allies. This alone weakens the ties of alliance which existed between them. This, of course, does not mean the isolation of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, but this circumstance already creates a certain pre-requisite for such isolation. It is, therefore, not suprising that the British refusal to guarantee the frontiers of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia was estimated as a defeat for French diplomacy, and, what is more, as being more than a defeat for the diplomacy of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. Germany was allowed greater freedom of action in the East than in the West. They immediately translated this freedom of action into the prosaic language of territorial and other compensations which Germany might receive at the expense of her less secure Eastern neighbours. In the diplomatic cabinets and in the newspapers, it was already mooted that there would be a possibility for Germany

to receive back the Dantzig corridor. In order to compensate Poland who would thus lose her outlet to the sea, they began to assure her that she could occupy Memel. More audacious guessers began to talk of the possibility of Poland occupying the whole of Lithuania by way of compensation. Finally, there were even some people to be found who said that Poland could receive compensation at the expense of White Russia and the Ukraine.

We have already referred to the decisive role which Great Britain played in all these negotiations. For years the French press has been pointing out that Lord D'Abernon, the British Ambassador in Berlin, was the real inspirer of German foreign policy. Not only with regard to France, but on many other questions, the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs does not take any steps whatsoever without having previously consulted Lord D'Abernon. According to other information in the press, the original idea of concluding the Guarantee Pact did not even come from Great Britain, but from America and it is considered that the inspirer of the first offer made by Cuno in December, 1922, was Mr. Houghton, at that time American Ambassador in Berlin and now Ambassador in London. Even if these rumours do not correspond with actual facts, they nevertheless have serious foundations as America is undoubtedly interested in the stabilisation of European capitalism. It is not only a question here of American industry being interested in the European market. The fact that American finance capital and the American Government are interested in European affairs is a much more decisive factor. The allied governments—Great Britain, France, Italy, the Little Entente, etc.—owe America more than ten million dollars exclusive of interest. America cannot obtain this interest and the settlement of the colossal debts if the European governmental machine does not work more or less smoothly. After the war, when the valuta in all European countries and in Germany and Austria in particular fell almost to zero, American capital acquired an enormous quantity of movable property and real estate in Europe, commencing with old ducal castles, valuable antiques and anything relating to the shares of first class industrial, transport and other European concerns. Later, thanks to the Dawes Plan, America was enabled to direct the entire German economic system. It is a well-known fact that the "Dawesisation" of Europe and, if possible of the entire world, is the ideal of American capital. But the Dawes Plan cannot be realised without the proper political pre-requisites; hence also the endeavours of the United States to limit armaments, to remove the con-

tention between capitalist States so that they will be able to work and to pay back the Americans. Hence also, the ingrained, boundless hatred of the United States for the revolutionary working class movement, and in particular for the Communist Party, despite the fact that revolution is not directly threatening the United States, owing to her internal and foreign situation. But there was no need for America to come out absolutely into the open and take upon herself obligations when she could remain behind the scenes and at the same time conduct her own policy.

The interests of the United States clashed with the interests of Great Britain, who had assumed the role of a collector of the forces of international capitalism, not through fear but for conscience sake. The stabilisation of European capitalism had also become one of the dogmas of British politics. Before the war Great Britain was proud of her superb isolation, she was cautious of participating in any alliances whatsoever. Since the Crimean War history had only known one military alliance of Great Britain and that is the alliance with Japan, which was also annulled in 1922. It is true she had the "Entente Cordiale" with France and Russia which led to the imperialist war, but there was no formal military alliance. Up to the last moment she reserved herself freedom of action, which as everybody knows, is considered to be one of the causes of the world war, because if Germany had known for sure that Great Britain would be on the side of Russia and France, she would hardly have decided to launch forth on such a mad adventure. After the war, the position of Great Britain changed. Although in the military sense she emerged victorious, having seized new territories, smashed the German navy and mercantile fleet, etc., nevertheless the war ended as a defeat for Great Britain, both economically and politically. On the one hand, she lost her supremacy as a capitalist State, which was assumed by the United States; on the other hand, the war and the October revolution shook her colonial empire, she has sown the wind and reaped the whirlwind. In Asia and Africa she found herself faced with national and revolutionary movements; in Australia, Canada and South Africa she was faced with the aspirations of the dominions for independence; in Europe and in Asia she was confronted with the Soviet Union, which acts as a moral support for the national regeneration of the Asiatic peoples. Having torn up her treaty with Japan (as she had to choose between Japan or America), she was also confronted with the Japanese danger. In this manner the very foundation of the British Empire had been shaken. Before the war it was

said that Tsarist Russia was a colossus on clay legs; this is what the British Empire has now become. All post-war British political literature is permeated with the deepest pessimism with regard to the future, and one of the principles which the British Government has above all had to renounce is the principle of "superb isolation." We would cite here many articles from British journals, particularly the "Fortnightly Review," articles inspired, in fact, one might also say written, by the Foreign Office, in which "superb isolation" is subjected to the most rigorous criticism. Great Britain, which formerly acted as a support for many, is now in need of support. She has to keep her fleet and her military forces in a state of mobilisation in order to shift them wherever danger threatens her and remains true to the tactical rule—do not waste forces on secondary aims.

Peace is necessary in Europe in order that there may be chances of success in conquering the East, and the frontiers of the East do not commence from the Caucasian mountains, but with the Soviet frontier. The same thing is necessary in order to be able to fight with chances of success against the working class on one's own territory. British capitalism can only preserve her power at the price of victory over the revolutionary East and over the British proletariat. The present British Conservative government which came into power with the aid of the famous forged letter, has been set the task of curbing the British working class. Wage reductions, lengthening of hours and as a prelude to this, attacking and weakening the trade unions—these are the things that every banker and industrial magnate who votes for the Conservative Party has in mind. The economic literature of England—even including the speeches which the Liberal economist, Keynes, delivered in Moscow—are permeated through and through with this very spirit. But this task has been found to be not quite so easy. The attempt made through the personal initiative of the Members of Parliament to prevent trade unions from subsidising the Labour Party has met with failure. This attempt made by the mineowners to lower the miners' wages and to increase the hours has met with the same failure, in face of the determined will of the working class to defend their interests even at the cost of a general strike. The Baldwin Government was even compelled to compensate the mineowners out of the State Treasury for what they are losing, according to their calculations, because of the present Labour conditions in Great Britain. But it would be the greatest of errors to draw a conclusion from this that the British bourgeoisie have renounced their intention of conducting a de-



cisive struggle against the working class. The Labour leaders as may be seen from a recent statement of the ex-Minister of Health, Mr. Wheatley, who is a representative of the Left-wing, expect that the next year or even the end of this year will be accompanied by severe economic conflicts which will be decided by means of lockouts and strikes, i.e., outside parliament. Wheatley is even not afraid to predict that "through the fault of the Government and the industrialists, a real civil war might arise from this situation." "People are accustomed to think," he states, "that the British Government adopts an impartial attitude towards conflicts. But this was true until Joynson-Hicks became Home Secretary. He is undoubtedly the British Mussolini and one need not doubt but that he will drag England into the economic struggle. He has torn off his mask, he is no longer member of a neutral Cabinet desiring to be an impartial mediator between the workers and the employers. For the first time in history, we see the formation of a strike-breaking organisation supported by the Government, for it is evident that Hicks has the support of the authority of the entire Cabinet. We have unexpectedly got into a position in which the central and local authorities have openly become a weapon of capitalism and are terrorising the working class masses of the country." (Re-translated from Russian.)

The Conference of the Conservative Party at Brighton confirmed Wheatley's prognosis, in unanimously accepting the motion of its vice-President concerning legislation for the punishment of propaganda aiming at instigating class war, or the stoppage of work in public undertakings, etc. We may see how strong is this desire of the British capitalists to give decisive battle to the working class from the fact that they themselves have taken up a rather passive attitude towards the profound industrial crisis in England, calculating that if this crisis becomes more acute it will primarily weaken the working class and only afterwards weaken the capitalists. In the economic relations of Great Britain we are now dealing with a phenomenon which may be termed defeatism—to suffer defeat in the field of trade for a certain period in order to be able all the better to deal a political blow at the working class.

It is symptomatic that the call for a decisive struggle against the working class sent forth a few days ago by the Conservative Congress at Brighton, coincides exactly with the negotiations for the Guarantee Pact. This coincidence

will help us to decipher the real social meaning of this Pact as a weapon, not only against the Soviet Union and the revolutionary East, but also against the British working class.

**A law against Communists is naturally a supplement to the Guarantee Pact and the Guarantee Pact translated into diplomatic language is an anti-proletarian weapon of struggle.**

Great Britain does not hide her feelings towards the Soviet Union and here, of course, it is not only a question of what is written in the Conservative press, not even of what is said by irresponsible members of the House of Commons or Lords and even Ministers such as Joynson-Hicks, Lord Birkenhead and Churchill. Here it is a question of the statements which are made by the British Foreign Minister, Chamberlain. Thanks to the secret memorandum from Chamberlain to the French Government published in the New York newspaper, "The World," on May 10th of this year, which is undoubtedly genuine, we may learn the real aims which the British Government pursues in concluding the Guarantee Pact. "Europe is now divided up into three main elements: victors, vanquished and Russia," it says in this document. "The Russian problem—this permanent though formless danger—can only be treated here as a problem. It is impossible to foresee the consequences the development of Russia will have for the future stability of Europe. On the one hand, it is true that the feeling of insecurity undermining the health of Western Europe is to no small degree caused by the disappearance of nations. On the other hand the Russian problem at the present moment is rather an Asiatic than a European problem. To-morrow Russia, perhaps, will once more appear in the European balance of power. But for the time being she hangs like a storm-cloud over the Eastern horizon of Europe. Russia is not a factor of stability in the definite sense. She is indeed the most threatening element and a policy of security must be decided upon despite and perhaps just because of Russia." (Re-translated from the Russian.)

In another place Chamberlain formulates his thoughts still more precisely when he says that the formation of the Soviet-German bloc must be hindered and it goes without saying that this is possible under conditions where Germany would be drawn into an Anglo-French grouping. It is true that the Rapallo Treaty, which was more of a symbol than anything else, did not serve as a serious obstacle for Ger-

many to go over to the other side of the barricades from time to time and to act against us together with our enemies. It did not prevent a conflict with the German Government in connection with the raids and searches made on the Russian Trade Representation in Berlin; it did not hinder the campaign conducted in the press and in German diplomatic circles for a rupture of negotiations with MacDonald, which ruined the attempts of the Soviet Government to effect a loan on the London money market. Germany, in her foreign policy, has more frequently consulted not us, but Great Britain. However, with our foreign and economic position becoming more strengthened our support to Germany has also become more real and the Rapallo Treaty has been able to become a starting point for a decisive orientation of Germany towards us. Great Britain had to prevent this. Great Britain formulated the moral dictatorship she exercises over Berlin by means of formally involving Germany in her policy. Locarno is the reply to Rapallo.

There still remains another motive worthy of notice in British policy which has urged her on to concluding the Guarantee Pact. With the crisis which British industry and British trade in general are now experiencing, the political and financial stabilisation of Europe are necessary for the economic restoration and development of Great Britain herself. The fall of the French and Italian valuta is not advantageous for Great Britain, just in the same way as the difference between the British pound and the American dollar was disadvantageous for America. Countries with a low currency are placed in better conditions for competition. In exactly the same way as America brought about the restoration of the gold standard in Great Britain, Great Britain is interested in restoring the gold standard in France and Italy. But this is only possible, firstly, if the problem as to war debts be solved, and secondly if a stable political position is secured. However, in giving this consideration deserved attention, it is necessary to emphasise that it is not a decisive factor for Great Britain. For Great Britain the Guarantee Pact signalises first and foremost the international and internal political strengthening of British capitalism.

On the other hand, we see that the main motive that has urged the French Government to conclude the Guarantee Pact is undoubtedly the influence of the New York and London Stock Exchange. The question which dominates all other questions in France at the present moment is

the financial question. France is threatened with a real catastrophe if she fails to regulate this question.

Interest on State debts absorb more than half of the French expenditure estimate. In addition to this, the French Treasury has to cover during this year alone, short term treasury obligations of more than 20 milliard francs. The internal State loan—which was issued with such a boom and in favour of which an energetic campaign was waged not only in the press but also in the Catholic churches, the Protestant chapels and the Jewish synagogues and on behalf of which the members of all French political parties conducted agitation in the press and by radio and as a result of which Caillaux expected to receive 30 milliard paper francs—met with complete failure. At best it will not even produce 10 milliards, i.e., one-third of what was expected, despite the extended period of subscription. France was able to regulate her debts with Great Britain by undertaking the obligation of a yearly payment of interest and amortisation of £12,000,000 during a period of 62 years. But the attempt to regulate debts with America was unsuccessful. America merely concluded a temporary agreement for five years during which France will pay her £8,000,000 per year, after which the question of regulating debts will once more arise. As the regulation of debts for Great Britain was also made dependent upon the regulation of debts in America, the decision taken in London by Caillaux and Churchill was also temporary. The result of all these negotiations conducted by Caillaux in London and in Washington was that as from next year, a further expenditure of £20,000,000 must be envisaged in the estimate, i.e., more than two milliard French francs. France's hopes are now directed to an American loan, and perhaps are aspiring to British credit, but without the Guarantee Pact neither America nor Great Britain desire to aid France.

Of course, besides this circumstance, no small role has been played by the desire of the French Government to conclude a Guarantee Pact even at the cost of cooling off and weakening her alliance with Poland, even at the cost of subjecting her foreign policy to Great Britain—a desire dictated also by the profound disgust which the French masses (not only the workers, but the peasants and petty bourgeoisie also) nourish with regard to any new war. This has now become apparent during the war in Morocco and Syria where the French Government is endeavouring to send mainly coloured troops. It did not even decide to de-



tain in their barracks the soldiers who were due for demobilisation. For a Radical Cabinet, a pacifist policy is a means of maintaining the support of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie.

As far as Germany is concerned, considerations of an internal or foreign order, political and economic, are of equal value in her policy. Germany reckons that with the conclusion of the Guarantee Pact she will obtain great freedom of action. Some German politicians even assert that the conclusion of the Guarantee Pact will make Germany more independent with regard to Great Britain and will facilitate her rapprochement with France. They allude—perhaps not without foundation—to the fact that the maximum influence of Great Britain on Germany coincided with a moment of maximum tension in the relations between Germany and France, and by the way, in exactly the same manner as happened during the occupation of the Ruhr district. This observation, which, in itself is correct, does not remove the fact that the antagonism between Germany and France is immeasurably more profound than between Germany and Great Britain, and that if Germany may sometimes go with France against Great Britain in this new grouping, it will be just vice versa in the majority of cases. One way or another, Germany supposes that the Guarantee Pact and entry into the League of Nations in securing a more favourable policy on the part of France will at the same time allow her to direct her attention to improving her foreign situation in other directions. The German Nationalists are already building hopes in soon being able to solve positively such tasks as the return of the German colonies, which were taken over by the Allies, the annexation of Austria, the improvement of the position of German Minorities in Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Jugoslavia and Roumania, and even as a more distant task, the return of the Dantzig Corridor. The immediate future will show us how realistic are these dreams. On the whole, however, the German Nationalist Party sees in the Guarantee Pact the defeat of German diplomacy. The assumption is already expressed that Stresemann, who was the most responsible author of the Guarantee Pact, will soon have to leave the Foreign Office and the Guarantee Pact is a starting point for strengthening not the Left bourgeois parties, but the Right. Stresemann will soon become as popular among their ranks as Rathenau did in his time.

The financial and economic considerations which play so

large a role in German politics are expressed in the need to recall the serious crisis now being experienced by German industry due mainly to the absence of working capital. The bankruptcy of the Stinnes concern, the serious financial difficulties of other capitalist industrial groups, the enormous debit balance in Germany's trade (though there are grounds for suspecting that this trade turnover does not correspond with reality and is merely political-statistical double dealing) have played no small role in the initiative of Germany. Whichever way you look at it, Germany has taken up a new, decisive orientation for a long time to come.

Germany's acceptance of the Franco-British conditions can leave no one in doubt. Germany only pursued one aim in drawing out the negotiations—that of raising her market value. The difficulties which the German nationalities put in the way of their Government amount objectively to the same thing. The German government counted on obtaining satisfaction on the so-called "Secondary questions," i.e., early evacuation of the Cologne district, curtailment of period of occupation of the remaining Rhine regions, and the return of, if not all at any rate of a part of, the former German colonies (it is said that Great Britain has already promised this), the abolition of the Allied Control Commission, simultaneously with a certain weakening in the disarmament regime, the right to build more powerful aeroplanes (according to the Versailles Treaty Germany had not the right to build aeroplanes resembling those of military type) and so forth. But the trend of the negotiations at Locarno indicates that the German delegates have not been able to carry through the "secondary" programme.

German official circles in reply to the criticism which the Soviet press appressed to Germany that she was tearing up the Rapallo Treaty and that she was going over to the side of the enemies of the Soviet Union, stated that Germany was remaining true to her friendship for the U.S.S.R. We are eager to believe that Germany does not desire to lose the support that she can find in the U.S.S.R. The signing of a trade agreement which took place recently and the granting of short term trading credits for 100,000,000 roubles to Soviet industry would appear to confirm the intentions of Germany to continue the policy consecrated at Rapallo. But this will not depend simply upon Germany herself, but upon her new partners. And the latter declare quite unambiguously—if we are to believe a recent statement of "Le Temps" the semi-official organ of the French

Foreign Office—that Germany must now choose “either with us or against us.” Of course, in practice, there is nothing absolute in relations between States. Antagonism and differences in interest are so great that one may in advance consider as excluded such a position where the line of policy of all States, even those who have entered into close alliances, might entirely coincide. One may say exactly the same thing with regard to the policy of the new grouping. In certain spheres of interests they will be pulling against each other, but such questions as Communist propaganda, the Labour Movement, debts and nationalised private property, represent a common platform which will unite Germany with other capitalist States repeatedly against us.

On the other hand, if Germany gets back part of her colonies, she will be drawn (and if Great Britain agrees to assist Germany on this question, it is only with this motive) into the colonial policy of the imperialist States and will together with them form a united front against the revolutionary East and the U.S.S.R. There remains then but a comparatively narrow sphere of purely commercial interests in which Germany will be interested in strengthening her friendship with the U.S.S.R.

One must not close one's eyes to the fact that the new international grouping will still further increase the isolation of the Soviet State in the capitalist world. In general, the U.S.S.R., as a revolutionary State, is compelled to practise the policy of “super-isolation,” using rather different motives from those which Great Britain used when before the war she was the only representative of that policy.

If during the period of intervention and civil war the Soviet regime maintained its existence and strengthened its State this is all the more possible now when the political, military and economic power of the Soviet Union are making themselves felt in Europe and also in Asia. Finally, the capitalist bloc is not monolithic. The so-called stabilisation which has removed sharp conflicts between capitalist States makes their separate interests become yet more apparent. The decisive struggle for world markets, which is now facing us, will still more increase the rivalry and antagonism between them, and the same thing will be the case in the field of politics. The Rhine Guarantee Pact and the other treaties have been drawn in “the framework of the Versailles Treaty.” In other words, chains are being drawn tighter and tighter round Germany which are strangling

her existence and development in the form of territorial amputations, reparation debts, limitation of armaments, etc. All the peace problems caused by these treaties of violence—not only the Versailles but the others also—remain unsolved. The Guarantee Pact does not even constitute a reconstruction of the rotten edifice of the European balance of power, but only a thin layer of whitewash on its dirty walls. At the same time this is still a further proof of the impotence of the capitalist governments in their attempts to place international relations on a firm peaceful basis. The Locarno Conference does not mean peace, but a step towards new wars.

P.S.—This article was already written when news was received that the work of the Locarno Conference had been terminated successfully. It would appear from the scrappy telegrams that have appeared in the press that the Rhine Guarantee Pact has been signed in the form that the Allies proposed. Germany has had to capitulate, and with regard to Article 16 of the League of Nations Statutes she has agreed to separate, one-sided “respectable” statements that in view of her peculiar position the Allies will be more condescending towards her in the fulfilment of her obligations with regard to Article 16. The Arbitration Treaties in Germany, Belgium and France have also been accepted in the form in which they were formulated in the original French proposal. In the Arbitration Treaties between Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland, France does not appear formally as a guarantor, but she has signed a separate agreement with Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, in which she declared herself to be such a guarantor. As far as the “secondary” demands of Germany are concerned, these were simply turned down, judging by the information received. Meanwhile, everyone is contented; the British, the French and the German press are triumphant, everyone is joyful. But we must not forget the proverb: “He who laughs last laughs longest.”

X. X. X.





# Otto Bauer: the Biggest Man in the International

## 1. The Marseilles Congress and its Hero.

**T**HE German bourgeois newspaper "Der Montag-Morgen" wrote about the Marseilles Congress of the Second International in the following strain: "It is very significant for the present position of Socialism that the Marseilles Congress of the Second International passed off unnoticed. Europe talks of Briand, Caillaux, Churchill, but not of Marseilles. Formerly the decisions of these ecumenical Socialist councils were ultimatums addressed to the bourgeois world. And now? Marseilles reminds one of the Stockholm Church Congress, there, too, bodies which are impotence personified vainly endeavoured to become a force by unification."

What took place in Marseilles was not a meeting of inspired revolutionists, but a rendezvous of party "excellencies" made wise by experiences, who side by side with the Red badge wore also the national badge. They are routinists of the political profession, their speech is clever and restrained, they are as far removed from enthusiasm as from acute scepticism, their hold over the masses is infinitesimal compared with their hold over the Party bureaucracy.

They struggle between two fires. During the years of war they became everywhere part of bourgeois States and everywhere bourgeois society endeavours now to get rid unobtrusively of these people who have wormed themselves in. The Marxist has done his work. From the Left he is threatened by Communism. Is it not an ominous symbol that Communist workers endeavoured to break up this Congress? The Social-Democratic Parties of all countries are now on the defensive, they find themselves as in a vice between Mussolini on the one side and Zinoviev on the other side. They maintain their numerical strength, but they no longer attract new members; neither do they influence the trend of events. Their excellencies in Marseilles talked a great deal and probably made many decisions, but the fatal question was not raised: "How does it really stand with

Socialism in the present development of events?" There is something fatal in the Second International. Although every one of its members thousands of times made compromises and probably unavoidable compromises, they still retain the old emblem and the old phraseology. Its leaders, good government officials and acceptable as Cabinet Ministers, are still using revolutionary terminology which their practice has betrayed hundreds of times and in which they themselves no longer believe nor can believe.

The old International fell a victim of the war. There are still in it Socialist Parties with very different national interests and orientations, but there is no longer the force which unites them all. What we see now before us in the form of an International reminds one of a "faded belle who cannot part with her old pretensions." This is how an organ of the ungrateful bourgeoisie, which is now feeling more firmly in the saddle, kicks out the lackey who helped it to mount the steed. But Social-Democratic Parties are not thin-skinned. Even now they are animated by the ardent desire to do service to their beloved bourgeois fatherland. To succeed in this they must pull themselves together, they must assume a more dignified mien before the proletariat. For this purpose the Marseilles Congress brought forward Otto Bauer in the capacity of chief reporter. He was entrusted with the formulation of the resolution on the most acute question—"The Eastern Problem." According to the Social-Democratic press this report was listened to at the Congress with bated breath and called forth loud applause. He pleased all; he, so to speak, united them all with his wise and noble resolution, and after the Marseilles Congress a British newspaper paid him due honour by calling him "the biggest man in the International"!

## 2. Whence Did He Come?

The hero of the Marseilles Congress, Otto Bauer, is a product of the Austro-Marxist school. This school, which became crystallised a long time before the war, combined in itself the German inclination to theoretisation with the practiciness, adaptability and compliance of a petty broker. It prided itself on its endeavour to adapt the teachings of Marx to the concrete Austrian situation, to develop and supplement his teaching in such a way as to make it serve as the theoretical justification for the complete and stable adaptation of Austrian Social-Democracy to the rotten Austrian State order, that variegated conglomeration of

States historically doomed to destruction. Austro-Marxism persistently endeavoured to embrace the attainable and to reconcile the irreconcilable, priding itself on this as a testimony of profound realism and the instinctive understanding of life's demands.

Austro-Marxists, in the person of Karl Renner, endeavoured to reconcile the class struggle of the proletariat with support to the super-national power of the Hapsburg dynasty; they succeeded in this to such an extent that the Austrian Emperor, the old Francis Joseph, perused every day the "Wiener Arbeiterzeitung" over his cup of tea and commented on it thus: "They reason very sensibly, but what do they want of me?" Austro-Marxists, as represented by Otto Bauer, gave a new theoretical basis to the national question according to which the term "nation" is not defined by community of language and community of territory, but by community of historical experiences and historical culture; from this they deduced that the old Marxist slogan "The right of a nation to self-determination"—in the sense of its right to separation as a State—must be replaced by the right of a nation to cultural-national autonomy. This meant that internationalism must become the sum of nationalisms. Austro-Marxists, in the person of Fritz Adler and others (being very sensitive to the "last words" of decadent bourgeois ideology) did their utmost to reconcile the historical materialism of Marx with the "realism" of Ernst Mach. Austro-Marxists, in the person of Max Adler, endeavoured and are still endeavouring to reconcile the historical materialism of Marx with the historical idealism of Lassalle, as two sides of one and the same conception of history. The Lassalle "moral aim of history as a movement towards freedom" is, so to speak, identical with Marx's "historical necessity dependent on real relations," as both conceptions are based on the idea of "the social-practical nature of man." The Austro-Marxists even managed to reconcile Marxism with Freudism.

But the real genius of Austro-Marxism was the founder of Austrian Social-Democracy, Victor Adler, who united all and sundry in his party; who, whilst clinging religiously to the traditions of Marxist revolutionary phraseology, in practice converted his party into a typical morass. At a time when a fierce struggle was being waged between the Jaures and Guesdists in the French Socialist world, when in the German Social-Democracy orthodox Marxists and Bernsteinites were coming to grips, peace and goodwill reigned within the ranks of Austrian Social-Democracy as in the

garden of Eden before Adam's fall, or as in a Vienna café. Frantically clinging to the Austrian State order, which had no future, Austro-Marxists sacrificed the great future of the proletariat to the varying demands of the present moment, being always in the tail-end of events, using more or less revolutionary methods of action when under the pressure of the masses and reverting to extreme opportunism as soon as the wind was blowing to the Right. In both cases they threw themselves altogether either to the one or to the other side, the whole flock together under the guidance of their wise shepherd—Victor Adler—whose political wisdom consisted in watching the barometer, always and invariably pulling with the stream.

When the Second International was on its upward grade, Austrian Social-Democracy played hardly any role in it at all. But it is significant that when the world war was approaching, when the Second International (whose innermost kernel was already rotten through and through) lost its head and awaited helplessly the coming of the fearful events—the result of the differences in the capitalist world which had reached their climax—the wise mediator, Victor Adler was called upon to declare himself. It is significant that just at the Basle Congress of the Second International, on the eve of the declaration of war, Victor Adler became the recognised mouthpiece for the views and fears of the Second International. It was he who, in Basle, formulated the programme in which only one thing was lacking—an indication by what means the International was to carry it out.

How the Second International as a whole put this programme into practice is well-known, but it is just as well to remind people how Victor Adler, the author of the programme, carried it out at home. This is what Victor Adler's disciple, Otto Bauer, says in his book "The Austrian Revolution of 1918": "Fear of a Tsarist victory took possession of all the classes of the German-Austrian people including the workers. . . . During the first months of the war, German-Austrian democracy was entirely under the spell of these moods of the masses. It placed itself unreservedly on the side of the Central Powers. It placed unreservedly its entire influence on the masses at the disposal of the military authorities. . . . 'The State idea got the best of national principles!'—said Renner triumphantly : . . . As he considered the 'super-national State' a higher, a more developed State-form than the national State, his attitude to the question of the solution of the Austro-Polish and great Croatian problem was entirely in the spirit of Hapsburg



imperialism. He endeavoured to unite all. He endeavoured to unite all the German countries in full agreement with the plan of Hohenzollern imperialism by bringing into being a Central European Zollverein."

Such was the shameful attitude of the Austrian Social-Democracy when the wind was blowing from the Right. But when, after the February Revolution in 1917 in Russia, the mood of the masses in Austria underwent a change, Austrian Social-Democracy began cautiously to steer the other way. Otto Bauer tells us: "Under the pressure of the new mood of the masses the tactics of the Party were undergoing a change, this change was gradual, but it was there." When, under the influence of the Russian Revolution and of the growing national-liberation movement of the Poles, Croats and Czechs, the dreams of the preservation of the "super-national" power of the Hapsburgs and of the creation of a "Central European Zollverein" had faded away, when a great change took place "not only among the Social-Democracy, but also in the ranks of the ruling classes," when "there was a revival of the old differences which during the first years seemed overcome—hostility between Germanism and Austrianism," when "revolutionary ferment made itself felt more and more in the ranks of German-Austrian workers," when "the Austrian Government began to have secret negotiations about a separate peace," then at last the Austrian Party, always at the tail end of events—using Otto Bauer, who had been a war prisoner and had returned to Austria, as a mouthpiece—issued a declaration in which the Party very cautiously hinted that it stood for the complete self-determination of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and for the establishment of an independent Austrian republic: "If we wanted," said Otto Bauer, "to address the masses openly, we had to remain within the limits of censorship; we could not speak openly of revolution, we had to speak of it in some such terms as the complete 'victory of democracy,' 'convocation of the Constituent Assembly'; we could not openly bring forward the slogan of the disintegration of Austria, but had to use such expressions as: there can be a common government for all those who agree to it of their own free will." In conclusion, Otto Bauer says: "Under the wise guidance of Victor Adler, Zeitz and Austerlitz, the majority of the Party revised their tactics, watching the ever-changing historical situation, adapting their tactics to the vacillating moods of the masses and overcoming gradually the divergences of opinion between the Left and Right-wings of the Party. That the Party acted in the revolution as a united force was greatly due to the whole

trend of the revolution." Translated into Lenin's forcible phraseology this means that Austrian Social-Democracy was during the whole course of the war a typical example of "khvostism." Otto Bauer has always been and is still the faithful disciple of this Austro-Marxist school.

### 3. Otto Bauer's "Imperial" Judgment of the October Revolution.

When the February revolution broke out in Russia, Otto Bauer lived in Russia as a war prisoner. In September, 1917, he returned to Austria and published there in April, 1920, his book, "Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?" In this the author gave his appreciation of the October Revolution and on the basis of this appreciation answered the question "Can the Bolshevik revolutionary experience be applied to Western Europe?" As a true Austro-Marxist, determined not to quarrel with anyone, he did not condemn the Bolsheviks, he recognised the October Revolution as a historical necessity for Russia in **the present stage of its development**. But again, as a true Austro-Marxist, who is timorously adapting himself to circumstances and who endeavours carefully to evade obstacles instead of breaking them down, he comes to the conclusion in his book that the methods of the October Revolution, temporarily expedient for Russia, are absolutely inapplicable in Western Europe.

Disguising his timidity under revolutionary phraseology the author writes as follows in the preface to his book: "Russia, which during the centuries has been the citadel of European counter-revolution, has for the first time become the arena of the greatest proletarian revolution. For the first time the proletariat has assumed power in a great State. For the first time it goes through the experience of destroying the capitalist organisation of society and of creating a Socialist order. The capitalist world is trembling. . . With the help of cannon and howitzers, machine guns and bomb-throwers, with the help of gold—the recruiter of counter-revolutionary armies in Russia—and of diplomatic intrigues by which an attempt is made to draw weak nations into the counter-revolutionary ring, with the help of the famine ring, the blockade and with a whole flood of press distortions, lies and calumnies, the international bourgeoisie makes war on the proletarian revolution. But all this makes the hearts of the proletarians of all countries beat in unison with the heart of the Russian proletariat. Heedless of the bourgeois

campaign of calumnies and lies the toiling masses of all countries give token of their delight at the victories of the Soviet Republic."

It would seem that no better attestation of the October revolution could be given. One would think that the author of these lines, which describe so vividly how the bourgeoisie on the one hand and the proletariat on the other hand reacted to the October Revolution, would make an attempt to explain to the Western European proletariat by what means it could repeat in its own country the Russian experience of the destruction of the capitalist organisation of society and the creation of a Socialist order. Those who think so would be disappointed if they read the preface to the end. "The intention of the author was quite different." Taking into consideration the mood of the Western European workers in 1920, being afraid to offend their revolutionary feelings and being also afraid to be classed together with the bourgeois defamers of the Soviet Power, the author makes his obeisance to the October Revolution, like Anthony did to Brutus and prefaced every paragraph of his accusatory speech with the words: "But Brutus was an honourable man." But immediately after this, already at the end of the preface, he very cautiously gives the European workers to understand that in Western Europe an attempt to establish proletarian dictatorship would meet with unsurmountable obstacles; he makes European workers understand the justice of the saying: "What is good for the Russians is death to the Germans."

In order to show what support the Soviet power has in Russia he begins very cautiously, from the far-off early history of the peasant question in Russia, to prove that the peasantry played a decisive role in the October Revolution, that in fact the small peasant farms were twice victorious in this revolution. "At first it smashed up what remained of feudalism and then it resisted the advance of Communism." "But," says the author, "the strength of the Soviet power rests precisely on the fact that the proletariat recognised in good time the hopelessness of an advance against the peasantry and called a halt. The Russian peasant is not yet a 'political being.' It is only the struggle for the landowners' land which has drawn him into the whirlpool of history. But as soon as the landowners' land was conquered, as soon as that conquest was made secure, he reverted to the state of political indifferentism. As long as the Soviet power leaves the peasant alone in his village he does not mind very much what the Soviet power undertakes in the towns. Thus the

peasant withdraws from the arena of history and becomes again entirely absorbed in his petty local interests, in his non-historical existence; thus only the proletariat and the bourgeoisie remain on the scene. "This is the mainstay of proletarian rule." Dealing very fully with the construction of the Soviet State and analysing the Soviet constitution, the author shows that it is drawn up with a view to guarantee to the proletariat a predominating role in the Soviets, out of proportion with its numerical relation to the peasantry. "However," he continues, "the numerical supremacy of the peasantry over the industrial proletariat of Russia is so great, that in spite of the double representation of the industrial workers the peasants could occupy a dominating position in the All-Russian Congress of Soviets." But the Russian peasants do not aim at this: "Although the Soviet constitution gives the peasants an opportunity to rule in the Soviet Republic, their views are not reflected either in the legislation or in the policy of the Soviet Republic, except in respect of the agrarian legislation and policy. This can only be explained by the fact that the peasantry do not make use of the means of power conceded to them in the Soviet Constitution. . . . It is only the low cultural level of the Russian peasants, their semi-barbaric state, which make the Soviet Constitution a strong enough weapon to keep them out of the political life of the country." According to the author, it is precisely this semi-barbarism of the Russian peasantry which is the historical justification of proletarian dictatorship in Russia: "If Russia were a democratic republic the uncultured Russian peasants would become helpless victims of every kind of demagogue. Since the majority of electors is on a very low level of cultural development, universal suffrage is, as once stated in the Guesdes' programme, not a means of enfranchisement but a means of oppression. The bourgeoisie would probably find it quite easy to capture the peasant vote and to use it for its own purposes, appealing to their property instincts, their historic prejudices, their negative attitude to the towns, to the proletariat and to the Jews." "But," continues the author, "one must not think that the peasants in Russia are powerless, on the contrary in their villages they are unlimited masters. We have seen the Soviet power capitulate twice to them. And just because the Soviet power has done this the peasants are not interested in what is going on outside their villages."

The author goes on to demonstrate that the backwardness of the Russian proletariat also left its imprint on the Soviet order. "In the beginning of the October Revolution,"



he avers, "the Soviet Power's trump card was 'revolutionary creativeness' of the proletariat which aimed at being absolute master of all enterprises. But the backward Russian proletariat could not cope with this economic problem and, therefore, the self-activity of the toiling masses made room for bureaucratic centralism." As a result, the organisation of Soviet bureaucracy and Red Army rule begins to dissociate itself from its proletarian base and to develop gradually into an independent force above the classes only **ideologically** representing the proletariat and in reality a despotic power ruling not only over the bourgeoisie and the peasantry, but also the proletarian masses." This is not the fault of the Bolsheviks, says the author: "This despotic Socialism is not the result of a preconceived plan. For the Bolsheviks in the first stage of the revolution set all their hopes on the creativeness of the masses. They gave the masses the fullest possible scope for self-activity." It is the fault of Russian historical conditions: "The uncultured state of the Russian peasants is the only explanation for the fact that Tsarist despotism had to make room not for democratic self-government by the Russian people, but for a proletarian dictatorship which constitutes a small minority of the population. The cultural backwardness of the Russian workers is the only explanation why the dictatorship of the proletariat was bound to develop from a dictatorship of the proletarian masses, to a despotism of a small vanguard of the proletariat. . . . Despotic Socialism is a product of Russian lack of culture."

The conception of proletarian dictatorship, continues the author, which Marx built up on the basis of the French Revolution of 1793 and the realisation of which he expected from the German Revolution of 1848, could only become a reality in the Russian Revolution of 1917. But for this very reason this conception of Marx is not adaptable to the proletarian movements of present Western and Central Europe. Moreover, says the author, in Russia, too, proletarian dictatorship although historically justified is but a temporary phenomenon. In complete agreement with the Russian Mensheviks, Otto Bauer shows that the Soviet power in Russia will be gradually compelled for economic reasons to slip from proletarian dictatorship to democracy. "It will have to import enormous quantities of manufactured articles, it will probably have to pay also the old Tsarist debts." "To do this the Soviet Government will have to tax the peasantry very heavily." "Russia will stand in need of big foreign loans. . . . it will have to give big concessions to the foreign

capitalists, but is foreign capital going to give credits to a government which with one stroke of the pen cancelled all debts?" "In the end the Socialist economic policy will have to subordinate also the peasant homesteads to State control . . . As the Soviet power consolidates itself it will have to make an attempt to foist its laws (on the church, on marriage, on inheritance and on the family) also on the villages, which will bring it into collision with the traditional views of the peasants." On the basis of all these prophecies, Otto Bauer comes to the conclusion: "Dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia does not mean a victory over democracy, but a stage of development towards democracy."

Our Menshevik prophet, Otto Bauer, when writing his book did not foresee that in a year's time the Soviet Government would introduce the New Economic Policy, that in the course of the first five years of this policy, the Soviet industry would reach almost pre-war level without the help of foreign capital. He did not foresee that, parallel with the revival of our industry, its Socialist elements would grow at the expense of the capitalist elements. He did not foresee that, parallel with this and at the initiative of the Soviet Government, bureaucratic habits in the Soviet order would be displaced by democratic habits precisely for the purpose of consolidating proletarian dictatorship. As a typical opportunist who invariably caves in to the power of the bourgeoisie and who as invariably disbelieves in the power of the proletariat, he could not foresee all this. But at least the author has condescended to recognise proletarian dictatorship for Russia as a historically indispensable form of transition from Tsardom to democracy.

He takes quite a different view of the prospects of Socialist development in Western Europe. According to him the realisation of proletarian dictatorship there cannot be considered for a moment. There such an attempt would meet with a thousand insurmountable obstacles. There it would come into collision with the conservatism of cultural-politically-developed peasants, it would be resisted by the intelligentsia in many ways connected with capitalism, it would meet with inevitable economic catastrophes as a result of the cessation of capitalist production, as a result of a big change in its structure—rapid reduction in the production of articles of luxury to increase the production of articles of general consumption—as a result of interference with the credit system and the exchange of goods between States resulting in a debit balance, etc. Otto Bauer appre-

ciates social revolution as one would appreciate the profitability of a commercial enterprise and is terrified at its direct economic consequences. With respect to this one cannot help being reminded of a saying quoted by comrade Lenin: "What is a Philistine? An empty entrail so full of fear and hope."

What is the way out of this situation? What then is the path to Socialism in Western Europe? According to Bauer we must, in order to find this path, relinquish the old Marxian conception of proletarian dictatorship, which had only a historical meaning on the eve of the 1848 revolution: "The development of capitalism itself leads to a different proletarian ideal. In the epoch of Manchester Liberalism the proletariat set against capitalist anarchy Socialism as the principle of a systematic organisation of economic life by the State. But in the epoch of State capitalism Socialism sets against the all-powerful State power, against the bureaucratic rule over economic life, the principle of industrial democracy." According to the author, the Marxist path to Socialism must give way to the path proposed by the British Fabians and "Guild Socialists," the petty bourgeois couple Beatrice and Sidney Webb, from whom Otto Bauer has borrowed his "new" wisdom. According to this "new" theory of the Austro-Marxist Otto Bauer, concocted out of old mediæval rubbish, the confiscation of the means of production must make room for their gradual redemption at a fair price by means of "systematic tax-legislation"; the expropriation of the means of production must make room for their gradual socialisation. "As far as we can foresee, railways and mines would be the first to be socialised." Subsequently capitalists will see themselves compelled, through the growing "labour unrest," to agree to a partial and gradual participation by trade union and co-operative organisations in the management of enterprises together with the capitalists. This will subsequently lead to a gradual establishment of autonomous branches of production ("National Guilds"), the State being the arbiter in the event of any differences arising between them. Parallel with this the political super-structure will be reformed by a gradual transformation of a parliamentary and democratic republic into a "functional-democratic" republic in which at first there will be an equilibrium of class forces, the political influence of the proletariat increasing gradually at the expense of the influence of the bourgeoisie. Thus at the bidding of the Austro-Marxist Bauer, the social revolution will be transformed as if by magic into a pastoral idyll; this will be a bloodless revolution: there will be no convulsions; the

bourgeoisie will not even notice how power slipped out of its hands and came to be in the hands of the proletariat.

We will presently see with what success Otto Bauer put into practice this "social revolution" in his own country, in Austria.

#### 4. How he Made "Social Revolution" in Austria.

On his return from captivity in Russia, Otto Bauer joined again the ranks of the Austrian Social-Democracy, leading it together with Renner, Fritz Adler and others during the epoch of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and of the formation of the new German-Austrian State. The entire Austrian Social-Democracy in this epoch is fully described by Otto Bauer in his book, "The Austrian Revolution of 1919." This book deserves a careful study, for it gives us an opportunity to get better acquainted with a classical sample of the Menshevik Austro-Marxist method of leading revolution, in contradistinction to the Bolshevik method.

First of all, there is the question: "Did any kind of revolution take place in Austria, or was there instead of this only a military destruction of the Hapsburg Empire?" Otto Bauer, whose love for the word "Revolution" is as great as his fear of it, answers this question, of course, in the affirmative. Let us now consider what form this so-called revolution did take and the role of Austrian Social-Democracy therein.

**First Stage.** After Ludendorff's advance in the West had failed and Marshal Foch had taken up the offensive, after it had become evident that Germany was bound to be defeated, after Bulgaria had signed a separate agreement concerning a truce, only eleven days before Poland was declared a united independent State, only ten days before the Czech National Assembly and the "Socialist Council" organised a demonstration for a Czech Republic—in a word, when the Hapsburg ramshackle empire began already to fall to pieces, the Congress of representatives of German Social-Democracy in Austria, in answer to an enquiry of the German bourgeois parties, had the courage to declare that it "recognises the right of the Slav peoples to establish their own national States and demands the unification of all the German regions of Austria into a united German State,



which must define its relations with the other peoples of Austria and Germany, in accordance with their own requirements." In this declaration there was as yet not a word about a Republic. The Socialist declaration did not even dare hint at a fusion of Austria and Germany. And it is with respect to this "famous" declaration which simply, registered an accomplished fact that Otto Bauer pompously declared: "We demand a revolutionary act."

**Second Stage.** After Wilson had demanded "complete capitulation" on the part of Germany, after Ludendorff retired and Emperor Charles wired to Wilhelm that "he had definitely decided to obtain a separate peace and a truce within the next 24 hours," after the Croatian troops had revolted in Fiume, after Croatia, Slovenia, Dalmatia and Serbia had been amalgamated into an independent State, after the Czech workers had organised a demonstration for a Republic—after, generally speaking, the Austrian Empire had practically fallen to pieces, Victor Adler in a declaration on behalf of the Austrian Party demanded at last the establishment of a Republic on the occasion of the constitution of the Provisional National Assembly. And this is what Otto Bauer calls "revolution!" He says proudly: "On the battlefields of the Balkans and of Venice, the revolution [and not the armies of the Entente?—A.M.] smashed the iron mechanism which hindered its development. In the meantime we in the rear could make revolution without using violence. We parried by demanding during the decisive weeks from the 3rd of November to the 12th of December only that which had already matured and which could be made a reality, without heavy sacrifices." "During these weeks Victor Adler was leading the Labour Party for the last time," adds Otto Bauer. We shall see that Otto Bauer, Renner and others, on whom leadership devolved after Victor Adler's death, remained faithful to the injunctions of their teacher. Later, too, they only **demanded** that which did not require sacrifices, only that which was already coming in process of accomplishment without any effort on their part.

In his great love of revolutionary phraseology, which is only a cloak for his cowardice which is just as great, Otto Bauer is not content to call the disintegration of the Hapsburg Empire "Revolution." He even calls it "social revolution": "The collapse of the old power has at the same time freed the toiling masses groaning under the yoke of imperialism. The daily uproarious soldiers' demonstrations which had their beginning in Vienna and the enormous

mass demonstrations on October 30th were a testimony that the national democratic revolution was at the same time a social revolution. Why was it then a 'social revolution?' Firstly, because the military defeat of Austria [and not the revolution—A.M.] had disarmed the bourgeoisie: in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland the bourgeoisie and the proletariat fought together for the cause of national liberation"—says the author. Not so in German Austria: "The national revolution, which had destroyed the Hapsburg monarchy, did not represent here the final victory of bourgeois-national ideas, but on the contrary their defeat. The bourgeoisie was defeated here, together with the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns. The bourgeoisie had lost its authority. The disintegration of the imperial army meant the end of bourgeois domination." Secondly, because the Austrian workers were eager to seize power: "Every newspaper brought news of the struggle of the Spartacists in Germany, every speech gave information of the glorious Russian Revolution, which by one stroke had put an end to all exploitation. The masses who had recently witnessed the downfall of a strong Empire had no suspicion of the strength of the capitalist Entente. They imagined that revolution would spread like wildfire through the victorious countries. 'A dictatorship of the proletariat,' 'All power to the Soviets!'—nothing else was heard in the streets." At the same time there was revolutionary ferment among the peasantry: "Peasants had also returned home from the trenches full of hatred for war and militarism, for the bureaucracy and for the plutocracy. They too welcomed the freedom which had been won, they welcomed the Republic and the downfall of militarism. They rejoiced at the fact that local organs which were formerly under the administration of the representatives of the King-Emperor were now under the administration of representatives of the peasantry. Together with the proletariat they imagined that the political revolution must needs bring with it a revolution with respect to property and ownership."

This is how Otto Bauer describes the then situation in Austria. What did it mean? That the social-revolution had taken place in Austria? Certainly not. It meant that in Austria there were all the pre-requisites for a social revolution. But its actual realisation depended at that time on the attitude of the leaders of the Austrian proletariat, Austrian Social-Democracy. And what was its attitude? "To enhance the moral authority of the new government,"

Social-Democracy entered in February, 1919, into

a coalition with the Party of "Christian Socialists" who in the rural districts were currying favour with the peasantry and who in the towns "were under the influence of monarchist circles—the higher clergy, the clerical nobility and the counter-revolutionary officers' corps." Having entered into this coalition, the Austrian Social-Democrats, instead of concentrating their attention on the then demands of the revolutionary proletariat or of the revolutionary peasantry, concerned themselves only with the demands of the Entente. And the demands of the latter were presented in a distinct and unequivocal form. Then, immediately after the truce, the German-Austrian Government approached Wilson with the request to enable it to import foodstuffs from abroad into the famished country. His reply on November 24th was that foodstuffs would be brought on the one condition, the maintenance of "law and order." This is how Otto Bauer interprets his reply: "Wilson's Note of November 24th demanded the relinquishment of the social revolution." He should have said: "Wilson's Note demanded that social revolution should not begin." This Note found an echo in the ranks of the old Austrian Social-Democracy. It did its utmost to satisfy the demand not of the workers and peasants, but of Wilson and the allies. "The task before Social-Democracy," writes Otto Bauer, "was to provide the masses with a strong leadership to protect them from abuses which were threatening them because of their own political naivety and to purge them from 'lumpen-proletarian' elements. In these days of the collapse of all recognised authorities, the authority of Social-Democracy grew in strength. Social-Democracy alone could introduce discipline among groups of armed proletarians assembled in the barracks, bring them under its leadership, instil into them its ideology and induce them to resist that greatest temptation of all after a four years' war—the abuse of arms. The formation of the People's Army saved the country from the danger of anarchy. The Social-Democrats alone could cope with this remarkably difficult task, they alone had the confidence of the masses. They alone could persuade the workers that the terrible post-war misery can only be overcome gradually and cannot be removed by means of a violent revolution. The Social-Democrats alone could put a stop to the stormy demonstrations by means of negotiations and remonstrances. The Social-Democrats alone could negotiate with the unemployed, could manage the People's Army, could restrain the masses from revolutionary adventures which might have been conducive to revolution. How deeply the bourgeois social order had been affected was best shown by the fact that bourgeois

governments without participation of Social-Democrats had become an impossible proposition."

We have nothing to add to this picture. "The social revolution," led by the Austrian Social-Democracy, resulted in the latter doing an invaluable service to the Austrian and the world bourgeoisie; taking advantage of its influence on the toiling masses, it saved the bourgeoisie from a proletarian revolution. One of the direct results of the treacherous tactics of Austrian Social-Democracy was that the peasantry, which at first placed great hopes on the proletariat and on the revolution, turned away from them and became simply a weapon in the hands of counter-revolution. How the reactionary forces gradually got hold of the minds of the peasantry is eloquently described by Otto Bauer himself, who is silent only on one thing—that the blame for this must be mainly laid at the door of Austrian Social-Democracy, which being actually master of the situation did positively nothing for the peasantry "in order not to alarm the geese." "The revolution did not come up to the expectations of the peasantry," writes Otto Bauer, "the latter's hostile attitude to the proletariat was encouraged by the urban bourgeoisie of the Alpine provinces and by the clergy. The urban commercial class was the natural ally of the peasantry in the struggle against a centralised system of administration. The urban bourgeoisie felt instinctively that the peasantry was its ally in the struggle against the proletariat. The clergy gave an impetus to this peasant movement and organised it into a powerful force, hostile to the proletarian revolution. The peasantry were told in the newspapers and in the sermons that their cattle and timber were requisitioned in order to keep in idleness hundreds of State-supported unemployed; that the system of military administration, so irksome to the peasantry, had the joint support of Jewish capitalists and Labour leaders, who had gained ascendancy in the central institutions and in the provinces; that the revolution intended to nationalise peasant property and to abolish their church. The peasants had recourse to arms." In these lines Otto Bauer gives unwittingly a brilliant illustration of the cleverness of the bourgeoisie and the feudal lords who know how to take advantage at the moment of revolution of the famous "democratic liberties" in order to befool the peasantry and to make of it a counter-revolutionary weapon against the proletariat; he also shows how important it is at such a moment to throttle counter-revolution for good and all by **dictatorship** measures.

This does not imply that we mean to deny that Austrian



Social-Democracy would have found itself face to face with enormous difficulties if it had really intended to let loose a revolution and to lead it with a firm hand instead of betraying it. We do not mean to deny that an **isolated** revolution in Austria would have been immediately crushed by the Entente by means of blockade or intervention. But the thing is that it would not have been isolated. Apart from the fact that at that time there was already a Soviet Russia, that revolution would have rapidly developed also in Germany if German Social-Democracy (which is of one mind with Austrian Social-Democracy) had not betrayed it, it was practically victorious at that time in the countries adjoining Austria—Hungary and Bavaria. Under such conditions the foremost task of Austrian Social-Democracy consisted of giving energetic support to the Hungarian Soviet Republic. How did it accomplish this task?

All the equipment of the imperialist army of Austro-Hungary, all its weapons and ammunition, were concentrated in Austria. Immediately after the March revolution the Hungarian Soviet Government asked Austria for help. The Austrian Social-Democrats refused to give them arms. "We could not give them anything from the stores of our military department," writes Otto Bauer, "without infringing neutrality in the Czecho-Hungarian war. Immediately after the March revolution, the Entente raised the blockade of German-Austria, but on condition that the imported goods would not go to Hungary. We were, of course, compelled to accede to this condition. Nevertheless, we were able to give Hungary every manner of economic help. But this help was greatly limited by the fact that we could not risk any conflicts with our other neighbours." Thus in order to preserve neutrality in the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution, the noble Austrian Social-Democrats washed their hands like Pilate of old. It is but natural that the Hungarian Communists, in order to save their Soviet Republic, endeavoured to help to develop Communism in Austria which is its neighbour. But in this respect the Austrian Social-Democrats abandoned their position of strict neutrality and entered into a desperate struggle with Austrian Communists. They turned, first of all, their attention to the Workers' Soviets, where Communist influence was spreading rapidly. For this purpose a national conference of Workers' Soviets was convened at which the Social-Democrats carried through the decision to re-organise the electoral system to the Soviets, under the pretext of strengthening their authority, but in reality to fill them with bourgeois elements. They also carried through the second decision—to place them under uniform political leadership

"On the basis of these decisions," writes Otto Bauer, "the Soviets were re-elected the following week. Whilst these new elections, in which not only office and manual workers **but also the majority of officials** (sic) participated, strengthened the authority of the Soviets, their unification ensured for them uniform political leadership. This leadership went to Friedrich Adler whose revolutionary tactics during the war had gained him the unlimited confidence of the revolutionary working class. It was under his leadership that serious struggle was waged in the Workers' Council against the Communist adventurism. Under his leadership the workers came to the conclusion that an attempt to establish Soviet dictatorship in German Austria under the existing circumstances would be nothing but the suicide of the German-Austrian revolution." The struggle against Communism was more difficult in the Soldiers' Soviets. But here, too, the clever diplomats of the Austrian Social-Democracy found a way out. Under the influence of their agitation "the Soldiers' Soviets decided that the People's Army as the armed force of the working class must be subordinate to the leadership of the Workers' Soviets. As the latter had declined dictatorship this decision, which was an outcome of the ideology of the Soviets, meant relinquishing the establishment of the dictatorship of the latter by force of arms." Thus the Austrian Social-Democrats got their wish with the help of a twofold deception of the working class. First of all they polluted its opinion by introducing into the Workers' Soviets a large number of officials (to strengthen their authority!) and then they formally subordinated the Soldiers' Soviets to these polluted Workers' Soviets on the plea that the People's Army is the armed force of the working class and must be subordinate to it.

But the Austrian Social-Democrats did not rest content with this twofold deception of the working class. Being on principle against the use of arms when it is a question of struggle against the bourgeoisie, they did not scruple to use arms against the revolutionary workers: "In the night from June 14-15 the order was given to arrest the Communist representatives. On June 15 a crowd of several thousand Communists marched to the House of Detention to free the imprisoned leaders. On Gerl Street the way was barred to the demonstrators by a detachment of town militia and police consisting of workers, all of them members of the Social-Democratic Party. When the demonstrators endeavoured to break through the ranks of the militia, the latter fired with the result that 20 people were killed and 80 wounded."

Thus, with truly epic placidity, Otto Bauer tells the story of how members of the Social-Democratic Party shot revolutionary workers; he proudly adds: "The bourgeoisie could not have shown any resistance either in Vienna or in the industrial regions of Lower Austria: the police would have been quite powerless. The Bolshevik attack was only beaten off by means of struggle within the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets."

The Austrian Social-Democracy did a great service to the bourgeoisie by acting as its executioner. "The Communist hydra" in Austria was crushed and the way was clear for the smashing up of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. At the same time Austrian Social-Democracy began to hope that the way was clear for an amicable rapprochement with France: "We could no longer doubt," writes Otto Bauer, "the inevitability of the downfall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Under such circumstances neither the German nor the Hungarian questions could serve any longer as the cause of conflict between us and France. Rapprochement between us and France seemed now not only possible but essential. Thus we had to endeavour to curry favour with France." In order to do this Renner pointed out distinctly the changes which would have to be made in the tactics of German-Austria, declaring that the latter intended now to have a "Western orientation." This is where the foundation was laid for the future tactics of the German Social-Democracy with respect to the "Guarantee Pact."

What did Austrian Social-Democracy gain after all by this servile "currying favour with France," by this famous "orientation to the West"? At this time negotiations were going on in St. Germain concerning the agreement with Austria. What effect had this new course of the Austrian Social-Democracy, its decision for an "orientation to the West," on these negotiations? Otto Bauer himself gives an answer to this question with laudable sincerity: "The result of the Peace Treaty was in our hands. It certainly gave us fewer advantages than the second plan. In the period of rapprochement with France we obtained less than we had obtained during the period of our conflict with her." And then he goes on to say: "The ultimate result of this 'Independence' to which we were bound by the St. Germain Peace was that international financial control to which the Geneva agreement subjected us." As a reward for the servile position taken up by the first Austrian Coalition Government with respect to France, she, according to Bauer himself, only tightened the noose around Austria's neck.

But Bauer finds a consolation: If their attitude had not been so servile matters would have probably turned out even worse for them.

The ratification of the St. Germain Treaty in October, 1919, brought to a close the glorious life of the first Austrian Coalition Government in which, according to Bauer, supremacy was with Social-Democracy and during which, again according to him, Austria was going through a "social revolution." Of what then did this "social revolution" consist?—the astonished reader will ask himself. It consisted firstly in the following: "During this first stage financial policy was directed to the achievement of definite social aims. As long as the State budget was mainly based on the property and income tax and especially on the tax on war profits, we kept indirect taxes at a very low level. Moreover, we distributed among the population foodstuffs received as part of the foreign loan considerably under cost price." Hardly enough for a "social revolution"—the reader will say. But as Otto Bauer admits himself in all sincerity, even this little was done mainly with the intention of stifling revolution: "Owing to this," he writes, "there was a relaxation of the revolutionary tension—the result of the activity of Hungarian Bolshevism. Only because of this the class struggle did not become more acute and develop into civil war." The other effect of "social revolution" consisted of the Austrian Social-Democrats in the Coalition Government adopting legislative measures to curtail unemployment with the same ultimate aim—the prevention of a more acute class struggle.

The third "Socialist" measure consisted in "German-Austria being, after Russia, the first State where factory and workshop committees were formed by means of legislation." With respect to this highly "revolutionary act," Otto Bauer philosophises: "The creation and development of factory and workshop committees are of far greater importance for the development of a Socialist order than any expropriation by violent means in the event of the latter resulting only in bureaucratically administered, nationalised or municipalised State enterprises." Here, too, whilst speaking pompously of the great revolutionary importance of the factory and workshop committees in Austria, Otto Bauer betrays the Social-Democrats' real motive for the utilisation of these Committees. This is what he says: "The factory and workshop committees are instrumental in re-establishing labour discipline. Factory inspectors have stated that in some enterprises the management allowed the election of



factory and workshop committees even before the said law had come into force. This was due to the fact that it was only through them that discipline could be re-established." This is the crux of the matter!

The fourth and most important "Socialist" measure consisted of paving the way for the gradual socialisation of production. It is on this that Otto Bauer prided himself most of all, for in Austria he was the president of the "Committee for Socialisation" whilst Kautsky worked in an analogous commission in Germany. Here Otto Bauer had an opportunity to develop the plan which he had been hatching for so long—the realisation of "Guild Socialism." Here he had an opportunity to show the Bolsheviks a thing or two. What then did he accomplish?

First of all one must take into consideration the then objective conditions for the realisation of socialisation by the Social-Democrats. Bauer himself describes them quite well: "The self-confidence of capitalist society had certainly been shaken. The system of military economy placed capitalist production under State control, organising it into compulsory syndicates. Was it not the duty of the working class to take over this heritage? The finances of the defeated State were undermined and this could not be remedied by ordinary means such as State taxes. The bourgeois world reckoned that a "new economy" must be created. University professors of political economy, headed by the Austro-Germans such as Schumpeter, Grünberg, Lederer, Ammon, Schwiedland and savants from the bourgeois camp such as Goldstein and Neurath, wrote treatises on socialisation being the order of the day." On the other hand "workers refused to be any longer tools in the hands of employers. Workers wanted to dominate where they had collaborated and to rule where they had produced." Under such, as it would seem, exceptionally favourable measures concerning the socialisation of industries, Otto Bauer limited himself to laying before the National Assembly draft legislation concerning "public enterprises" which extended only to war industry enterprises which were in a very difficult position at the end of the war and to writing articles containing the **theoretical** motives of his plan for the organisation of socialisation which was only a rehash of the "famous" plan of the "Guild Socialists"!

The mountain gave birth to a mouse! Otto himself was compelled to admit that "the stormy timing which the law concerning public enterprises was

could not rest content with such a slow development of the elements of the Socialist future." Particularly the toiling masses could not rest content with this: "The masses," he writes, "are dissatisfied. They demanded much more than a mere representative could give them. The masses demanded solution by means of violence."

From all the above statements it is evident that the chief aim of Otto Bauer's "socialising" activity consisted of "leading" the workers, in damping their revolutionary ardour by these miserable palliatives in order to save the bourgeoisie from the actual realisation of Socialism. Otto Bauer himself betrays this secret: "The most violent attacks of Bolshevism were repulsed at meetings in factories and barracks. By means of these meetings discipline was gradually re-established; at these meetings sporadic strikes were settled and discipline and order were restored." The history of these factory and barrack meetings represents the internal spiritual history of the German-Austrian revolution. "The bourgeoisie which hardly noticed this process of the internal self-limitation of the working class failed to understand this internal history of the revolution." Ungrateful bourgeoisie! It failed to appreciate the great services which Austrian Social-Democracy had rendered it.

It is not worth while to dwell more fully on the further history of the Austrian so-called revolution. It was the logical outcome of the cowardly and treacherous attitude of Austrian Social-Democracy at the time of the first Coalition Government when Social-Democrats still played first fiddle in the Government, when they were masters of the situation. In the second Coalition Government which existed for twelve months—from October 17th, 1919 to October, 22nd, 1920—there came into being what Otto Bauer calls the "equilibrium of class forces" which was more and more infringed in the interests of the bourgeoisie. As before Social-Democrats participated in the Government side by side with Christian Socialists, but the "Viennese Clericals," says Bauer, "gradually succeeded in bringing the peasant deputies under their influence. The Prelate Seipel became the actual leader of the Christian Socialist Party." We would like to add to this that Prelate Seipel proceeded to bring the Social-Democratic members of the Government gradually under his influence. It is not surprising that on the admission of Otto Bauer "opposition to the coalition policy began to develop rapidly within the working class." This policy came to an end when, in connection with the ratification of the Geneva Agreement, avowed bourgeois counter-

revolution gained the day in Austria. In view of financial difficulties the Coalition Government was confronted with the dilemma: "To stabilise the krone at the expense of the proletariat and under the control of the Entente" or "to stabilise the krone at the expense of the bourgeoisie and under the control of the proletariat." The real head of the Coalition Government, Prelate Seipel, of course, decided the question in the first sense, for good and all selling Austria's sovereignty and its right to unite with Germany, selling them for 520 million gold kronen. The Geneva Agreement "did not only make impossible union between Austria and Germany but even the establishment of a closer economic connection between them. Moreover the Geneva Agreement subjected Austria to control on the part of the General Commissioner appointed by the League of Nations and to control on the part of the Control Committee, consisting of representatives of the Powers who were guarantees for the Austrian loan. Finally, the Geneva Agreement made it incumbent on Austria to give unlimited powers to the government for the carrying out of reforms elaborated by it jointly with the General Commissioner and the delegation of the League of Nations—in order that the government should have itself the opportunity to carry out the decisions connected with the realisation of this programme without the sanction of parliament."

"The League of Nations appointed Dr. Zimmermann, Mayor of the town of Rotterdam, General Commissioner. From the day of his arrival representatives of the big banks and big industry began to besiege him in order to induce him to attack the working class. Thus the proletariat had not only to resist the Austrian Government but also the foreign General Commissioner whose power over Austria was almost unlimited as he could bring at any moment the economic life of the State to a standstill . . . The self-confidence of the bourgeoisie received a great impetus. Seipel was supported by all the propertied classes: Christian Socialists and German Nationalists, big bankers and big industrialists, agrarians and artisans, archbishops and Exchange brokers, the Jewish capitalist press as well as the pogromist anti Semitic press."

The results of the management by this charming company of people made themselves immediately felt in the position of the workers. An industrial crisis broke out in connection with the stabilisation of the krone. The number of unemployed receiving the dole grew between August and

February from 31,000 to 169,000. At the end of 1922 of the 620,000 organised workers only 275,000 worked full time. The first demand of the foreign control was the reduction of the number of civil servants by one-third. The influence of the trade unions dwindled and at the same time Fascist organisations and "technical aid" organisations began to spring up; their aim being the suppression of strikes in the vital branches of industry. This is how Otto Bauer himself describes the finale of the Austrian "social revolution" led by the Austrian Social-Democracy which had definitely rejected the Bolshevik path to Socialism and had chosen its own and safer path towards it!

### 5. His Achievements at the Marseilles Congress of the Second International.

Having learned by the experience of the October Revolution how European Revolution should not be made, made wiser by his own brilliant experience during the leadership of the Austrian "social revolution," Otto Bauer decided to step into the world arena and offer to the Second International his services in the capacity of leader. At the Marseilles Congress the Second International received this heaven-sent leader with open arms. This is very significant.

When Europe was on the eve of the world war catastrophe, when the Second International having lost its head expected the coming of threatening events, it entrusted the formulation of its programme of action or rather inaction to the Austro-Marxist Victor Adler. Dark clouds are again gathering. Europe again is on the eve of world conflicts. There is again in prospect a new epoch of wars and revolutions and again the Second International brings forward in the capacity of mouthpiece of its weakness the Austro-Marxist, Otto Bauer, the true disciple of Victor Adler.

Already on the eve of Marseilles, Otto Bauer formulated in the columns of "Der Kampf" the political platform which he succeeded in carrying at the Marseilles Congress. The goal which Otto Bauer has set himself can be expressed in two words: capitulation of the proletariat and the world revolution before the bourgeoisie for the prevention of world war. But Bauer knew full well that it would not be an easy task to make even the Second International agree to this bourgeois pacifist formula: on the one hand the British dele-



gation, which is under the influence of the British workers who are gradually veering to the Left, cannot endorse a formula or flagrant capitulation before the bourgeois. On the other hand the German and French delegations and all the Kautskys are so frightened by the Bolshevik revolution, that to put an end to this perpetual fear they would rather deal a blow to this red spectre by supporting a new war against the Soviet Republic: "Better an end with terror than the terror without end." Therefore, it was necessary to bring into play all the art of Austrian diplomacy in order, if not to liquidate, at least to slur over these contradictions. The best and time-honoured Austro-Marxist method of solving this question consists of combining revolutionary phraseology with counter-revolutionary action. Otto Bauer used this method with considerable success.

In his article "The Marseilles Congress," published in No. 8-9 of "Der Kampf," Otto Bauer says that hitherto, owing to the collaboration of the various parties at the discussion of the questions of reparations and the Guarantee Pact, the Second International has played the role of "an everyday-life International." The time has come now to eliminate all divergencies with respect to matters of principle between the various national parties, for terrible times are approaching. Again, as a hundred years ago, he says, differences are becoming very acute in the world between two hostile camps. Then there was at one pole the "Holy Alliance" for the protection of Monarchist State order and for the protection of the "Sanctity of Agreements." At the other pole there was the "Young Europe" of the bourgeois revolution. We see at present an analogous antagonism: at one pole we see "the pacifism of the ruling and satisfied classes" and at the other pole "the opposite militant-revolutionary tendencies represented by Bolshevism."

Outwardly this is a very flattering analogy for the Bolsheviks, but in substance this hypocritical formula insinuates that "the imperialist Powers want peace whilst the Bolsheviks want war." Otto Bauer dissociates himself from Kautsky: "One cannot imagine anything more dangerous," says he, "for the future than such an attitude on the part of the International (Kautsky's attitude) with respect to Bolshevism. The Bolsheviks represent a Party which no doubt is supported by one section of the Russian proletariat, undoubtedly a revolutionary and a Socialist Party." But whilst refuting Kautsky's interpretation of Bolshevism, he completely identifies himself as far as the Bolsheviks are concerned with the then attitude of the "leading group of the

Russia Social-Democrats—Martov, Dan and Abramovitch," and, therefore, he upbraids "the Left-wing of the British Labour Party whose attitude to Bolshevism is naive, non-critical and without real understanding of its tendencies." The Left-wing of the British Labour Party, he maintains, fails to understand that we must fight against Bolshevism mainly because "the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is after all a policy which calculates on war and is, therefore, irreconcilably divergent from the policy of our International, which considers it its most important task to do its utmost to prevent a world war."

Otto Bauer does not deny that "pacifism" of the League of Nations is not free from reactionary elements and he good-naturedly upbraids various sections of the Second International for their illusions with respect to this League. He is also heart and soul for the liberation movement of the peoples of the East. But in so far as this movement is taking a revolutionary form and has moreover the support of the Bolsheviks, it is bound to lead to a war which will destroy European civilisation; therefore, the peoples of the East must place the decision of their fate into the hands of Western "democracy" and parties of the Second International which will ensure "that the League of Nations, from being an instrument for the preservation of the present State order, becomes an instrument for the transformation of this order for the defence of national minorities, for the bestowal of autonomy on the Colonial peoples and for the abolition of the nationalist economy of protectionism." Thus, after all the compliments addressed to the revolutionism of the Bolsheviks, after all the nice things addressed to the peoples of the East fighting for their liberation, after all the friendly reproaches addressed to the Right Social-Democrats, Otto Bauer proposes to entrust the fate of oppressed peoples and classes to this same League of Nations which the parties of the Second International will lead on to the right path, having won the confidence of the high and mighty of this world by a modest relinquishment of all revolutionary devices.

This super-wisdom of the Austrian bourgeois pacifists formed the basis of the resolution on the Eastern question adopted at the Marseilles Congress and drawn up by Otto Bauer. We will not dwell here any longer on this resolution because it was already fully dealt with in our journal\* and because it is only a concretisation of the points which

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\* See the "Communist International," No. 15, 1925, G. Valetsky, "The Congress of the Second International.

appeared in the article in "Der Kampf" already dealt with. We will emphasise only those parts of the resolution which specially concern the Soviet Republic: "The International declares once more and stresses the obligation of all Socialist Parties to fight any aggressive policy directed against the Soviet Union. . . ." How they proposed to fight, the resolution advisedly does not say. The old threat of the Second International to declare a general strike in the event of war no longer finds a place in the resolution. "The Congress welcomes the improvement in the international position of the Soviet Union which took place after the Congress in Hamburg, mainly due to the energetic action of the Labour and Socialist International (!!!) . . . The circumstance gives the International the right to demand of the Russian people that it should aim at the re-establishment of all political and trade union liberties in the Soviet Union, that it should oppose any aggressive annexationist policy of its government as well as any propaganda which has for its aim interference with the internal affairs of other States. The Labour and Socialist International is convinced that the war peril would considerably decrease if the decision of the question of peace and war in the Soviet Republic rested in the hands not of a dictatorship, but in the hands of the peoples of the Soviet Union."

This paragraph, as we may see, aims at consolidating and strengthening the struggle of the Mensheviks against the dictatorship of the proletariat by the new demagogic argument that proletarian dictatorship must needs lead to wars. That the practical dictatorship of the British and French bourgeoisie in their States is fraught with wars, that they should be disarmed in order to prevent war, all this is conspicuous by its absence in the "disinterested" resolution of Otto Bauer. Finally, in the paragraph on the right of national self-determination, the resolution deems it necessary to deal with the right to self-determination of Armenia, Georgia and the Ukraine, whilst it remains silent on the right to self-determination of peoples who are groaning under the yoke of imperialism. All this goes to show the real meaning of the declaration in the resolution that "the struggle against aggressive policy directed against the Soviet Union is the duty of all Socialist Parties."

I reiterate the meaning of the resolution adopted at the Marseilles Congress is. **The proletariat must capitulate before the bourgeoisie in order to avoid a military catastrophe.**

Does Otto Bauer believe that by the complete capitulation of the Second International and of the workers behind it,

the League of Nations can be made into an instrument of peace? No, he does not believe this. When rendering account to the Vienna Party officials, after the Marseilles Congress, Otto Bauer said: "The Congress laid down in a resolution the conditions on which Socialist Parties can agree with the Guarantee Pact. The resolution was drawn up by our French comrade, Renaudel and was supplemented by additions made by other French and German comrades. Austrian Social-Democrats, it is true, will find much in this resolution with which they can agree, but they will have the feeling—is not much in the resolution based on illusions? Just think of the multitude of differences in the East, of the differences between the Big Powers and the Soviet Republic. If in spite of all this it is said that peace must be guaranteed by agreements between Governments, one cannot forget that the neutrality of Belgium was also guaranteed by agreements and that at the moment when a government feels that the interests of the ruling classes are in jeopardy, they treat neutrality agreements as scraps of paper. When we are told that all the dangers concealed in the Guarantee Pact will disappear as soon as Germany enters the League of Nations, we only shrug our shoulders." This shows that in his inmost heart Otto Bauer believes as little in the salutariness of the decisions adopted by the Marseilles Congress as Victor Adler believed in the efficacy of the decisions of the Basle Congress on the eve of the world war.

Did he at least succeed in firmly uniting the Parties of the Second International with respect to his bourgeois pacifist resolution? The answer is in the negative. Immediately after the adoption of the resolution, de Brouckère read at the Congress a declaration on behalf of twelve Social-Democratic Parties (of France, Poland, Esthonia, Latvia, Armenia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Georgia, Hungary, Finland, Belgium and Sweden), regretting that the resolution did not take a sufficiently emphatic stand against the tactics of the Soviet Government which "wants to revolutionise the world with red bayonets," and is following the path of Napoleon I. In this declaration regret is also expressed that the resolution touches also on Colonial questions, whilst the Congress laid down that Colonial questions should only come up for discussion at the next Congress in two years' time (when China and Morocco will have been crushed?) In conclusion the declaration says that the above-mentioned parties are voting for the resolution only because it speaks of the obligation of the International to defend "oppressed" Armenia and "oppressed" Georgia.



We can see that Otto Bauer's achievements were not very great. But what would you demand of this poor man? "The most beautiful girl in France cannot give more than she possesses." On Otto Bauer devolved the task: firstly to demonstrate before the world that there is such a thing as the United Second International and, secondly, to put rouge on the cheeks of this faded belle, to make them appear red to the workers who follow the Second International in order to enable the latter to induce the hoodwinked proletariat once more to capitulate before the bourgeoisie in the name of the establishment of a mythical lasting peace in Europe. These instructions Otto Bauer conscientiously carried out. . .

A pitiful Congress, a pitiful congress-hero! Fortunately, the destinies of the proletariat will be decided not by them, but in spite of them.

A. MARTYNOV.



## “Red Friday” and After

**T**HE direct clash between the British Government and the united Trade Union Movement on July 30, 1925, which resulted in the Government deciding to beat a temporary retreat and postpone the conflict, is the first act in a new series of struggles opening out in Britain and promising to cover a wider range than any previously. Like the situation at the fall of the Cuno Government in Germany, in 1925 (allowing for the difference in scale and stage of development) this opening success of mass solidarity has given a great impetus to the development of working class consciousness; and a period of intense preparation for future struggles now begins. This preparation is all the more important in order that a “German October” may not find its analogy in Britain in the coming period.

“Red Friday” is the name which has been given to the settlement of July 31st, 1925. This is in contrast to “Black Friday,” or April 15, 1921, when working class solidarity in resistance to the capitalist offensive was prevented at the last hour by the treachery of the reformist leaders and a heavy depression set in. The name in part reflects the exaggerated picture of “victory” presented by the reformist leaders after the settlement of July 31 (which was in reality not yet a victory, but only a postponement). But it does also justly reflect the triumphant demonstration of mass solidarity and has won general currency.

The events of “Red Friday” are a striking vindication of the correctness of the line of the International developed from the third to the fifth Congress—the line embodied in the United Front and the International Trade Union Unity Campaign. In England these slogans found particularly ready soil. The collapse of the British movement before the capitalist offensive in March, 1921, owing to the failure of unity, led to a widespread recognition and popularity of the slogan of the United Front. The forces gathered around the campaign of the United Front, found their first realisation and action in the struggle on “Red Friday” and

the success of "Red Friday" convinced the working class of the correctness of the line of the United Front.

The effects of "Red Friday" are an equally valuable example of the revolutionary significance of the United Front in the development of the working class. The value of the initial success of mass solidarity lies precisely in the impetus given to further development, in the immediate broadening out of the situation into a visible challenge of class forces, in the stimulation to the consciousnesses and further development of the mass movement, in the inevitable process of differentiation of the leaders before new issues, and in the forcing forward of further issues and even of the issue of power.

For Great Britain, "Red Friday" signifies a definite stage in the developing class struggle in Britain, and the opening of a new period of struggles.

Internationally, "Red Friday" signifies the first victory of the new forces that are gathering round the banner of International Trade Union Unity, and a stimulus to the working class power all over the world to stop the retreat and take up the struggle anew. Finally, for the subjects of the Empire, it signifies the rise of new forces in the heart of the Empire, which are willing and able to challenge the British bourgeoisie, and to which they can look with confidence for a strong ally in their struggles.

The current process of "Revolutionisation" in Britain has been analysed in the Fifth Congress and subsequently "Red Friday" is the first action in this process of Revolutionisation.

## 1. Why Conditions in Britain Drive to Intensified Class Struggle.

The clash of "Red Friday" is one of a series of clashes in British history during the past fifteen years. The year 1911, the year of the so-called "Labour unrest" and the great railway strike involving direct Government intervention as well as military "protection" of the railways, was the first sign of the new period of class struggles, still economic and trade union in character, but national in scope and on so large a scale as to involve direct conflict with the Government and

assume the role of political and class issues. In 1912 came the great miners' strike, forcing the Government to partial capitulation on the issues of the minimum wage. 1919, the year of revolutionary ferment, saw the impending miners' conflict outmanœuvred by Government diplomacy and the Coal Commission, and the national railway strike which was the sharpest conflict yet fought between the Government and the workers and which checked for the moment the attack on wages. In 1920 came the Councils of Action, checking the war on Russia by direct working class pressure on the Government. With 1921 came the supreme trial of the "Triple Alliance" of miners, railwaymen and transport workers against the Government, and the collapse of "Black Friday." With 1925 has come the rebuilding of the working class front and the challenge of "Red Friday."

1911, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1925. These clashes are landmarks in the history of the British working class. Each clash has been in certain respects wider in its scope and deeper in its import than the preceding; each clash has raised more and more urgently the question of the future, driving home big issues into the minds of both the working class and the bourgeoisie, raising more and more insistently the possibility of revolutionary issues.

What do these clashes mean? Are they sporadic and intermittent upheavals of the continuous economic struggle, carried on under the modern conditions of large-scale industry and virtual State capitalism in Britain? Or do they represent a continuous and ascending series which must inevitably deepen and expand in scope until they culminate in open revolutionary struggle? Objective conditions in Britain make certain the latter.

The successive and deepening clashes in the economic field, which have been the distinctive feature of the British working class in the current period, are the reflection of the accelerating decline in British economic conditions and the consequent growing divorce between British capitalism and the working class. To this process there is no escape for British capitalism, which is only able to maintain itself in the present period at the cost of intensified class struggle in Britain. The process, which had begun already before the war and gave its first signal of the new period in 1911, proceeds at a tremendous pace in the after-war period.



The decline of British capitalism, which is commonly spoken of, needs a more exact definition. The British capitalist class is still very strong: in certain respects (of extra-European economic penetration) it is still advancing. The profits of the British capitalist class (as represented in figures of national income, super-tax and death duties) are roughly double pre-war; this, after allowing for changes in money values, still represents a positive increase. But the foundations of British capitalism, owing to the emergence of new world factors, are being increasingly undermined. The attempts of the British bourgeoisie to adjust themselves to the new conditions and find a new basis inevitably lead to increased disruption and struggle both in the Empire and at home, so that British capitalism is becoming involved in a vicious circle; thus British statesmen are increasingly finding themselves faced with an insoluble dilemma.

Pre-war British capitalism was built on a basis of world financial supremacy which made possible the continued maintenance and expansion of the vast exporting industries—coal, iron, steel, machinery, textiles—that were increasingly developed out of all proportion and to the starving of home needs (the building shortage dates from the beginning of the twentieth century, and the fall in real wages). Thus already before the war the structure was extremely artificial and top-heavy, the worsening conditions of the workers were leading to the first large-scale mass unrest. Only the large foreign investment loans, extracted from the profits of industry and the poverty of the workers, made possible the placing of continual new orders for railways, locomotives, machinery in the face of intensified industrial competition and increased world production; this process intensified the industrial competition at every step.

This structure was inevitably smashed for good and all by the war. The financial supremacy passed to America, the already shaky industrial position could no longer be maintained on the old basis in the face of the shrinkage of markets after the war and the accelerated development of new industrial powers all over the world. The British bourgeoisie had to find a new basis.

Two processes were necessary for the re-establishment of British capitalist strength: first, the restoration of a leading world financial position (if necessary, with America); second, the re-organisation of British industry to meet new

world conditions of competition. But the British bourgeoisie was not strong enough to undertake both and had in fact to choose between the two. The choice went to the former. The much-discussed schemes of post-war "Reconstruction" (which would have involved heavy expenditure and, therefore, inflation) were scrapped. The pivot of policy from after the Armistice was made the restoration of the Gold Standard. This was accomplished by 1925 and the pound stood nominally at equal value with the dollar throughout the world. In this war the strength of British foreign investments was built up; but a heavy blow was dealt to British home industry. The high price level rendered effective competition in the world market all the more difficult; there was stagnation for five years in British industry with one or two millions unemployed; much of the plant grew out of date, relatively to France, Germany and America and the new industrial countries. On the other hand financial strength could only be achieved by "lowering the costs of production," i.e., the living of the workers (since effective re-organisation was ruled out), and this necessitated the renewed capitalist offensive of 1925.

During these "lean" years the bourgeoisie was able to maintain a high level of income, partly by the profits of deliberately restricted and specialised production and largely on the basis of their foreign investments and enterprises all over the world, i.e., on the basis of the colonial workers. In this way the return to the Gold Standard strengthened the position of the British bourgeoisie all over the world to the detriment of the British workers. Alongside the decline of home industry has gone an expansion of British capitalist industry abroad; the Industrialisation of India, consciously undertaken on the basis of the Report of the Indian Industrial Commission of 1916-1918, and the building of the new empire in the Middle-East have been prominent activities of post-war British capitalism. Leading British industrial firms have been rapidly developing subsidiaries in the Dominions and colonies and looking increasingly to these for their surest basis of profits. This process is, economically speaking, only in its early stages and, if carried through to its conclusion, would leave Britain simply as the parasitic metropolis of the imperial system, i.e., the administrative and spending centre, maintaining only specially skilled production, fine work, luxury trades, etc.—a tendency already visible.\*

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\* The report of the President of the Board of Trade in the House of Commons on July 6, 1925, on the economic situation for the past

In this way British capitalism is endeavouring to adjust itself to the new conditions and to reach what is in reality a new basis. But this new basis raises new contradictions which only increase the disruptive forces confronting British capitalism.

In the first place the development of the Empire, the increasing transformation of the Dominions and colonies from sources of raw materials and markets to centres of industrial production, not only weakens home industry, but inevitably develops the colonies along the path of independence. A native bourgeoisie arises, seeking gradually to win independent exploitation of "their" workers, pressing either towards independence or towards the orbit of the stronger new financial power—America. At the same time the development of a native proletariat and the increased exploitation of the peasants raise new revolutionary forces. Thus the new process of imperial development tends to increase the forces of disruption of the Empire.

In the second place, the new basis smashes the old links which united British capitalism and the British working class and formed the basis of the old class harmony reflected in the old trade unionism. The root of the harmony was the apparent "common" interests in the Empire, which maintained British industry. The development of Empire industry destroys the position of the British industrial workers and in particular the development of Empire industry on the basis of super-exploited colonial workers destroys the traditional "standards" of the British workers. The continuance of British industry under the new conditions of world competition demands heavier and heavier offensives upon the living standards of the workers. The same process which brings new and even enlarged profits to the British bourgeoisie in the midst of the decline of British industry also brings unemployment, worsening of conditions, wage-cuts and longer hours to the British workers.

Thus there takes place a complete divorce between the

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year showed, on the one hand, the basic industries all depressed—(coal exports down by 25 per cent.; pig iron production down by 33 per cent.; steel same as pre-war, but on a basis of much greater producing power; shipbuilding a "bad position"; cotton "dwindling"); but, on the other hand, the luxury industries prosperous (motors, "booming"; cycles "doing well"; rubber "a bright spot"; chemicals "on the upgrade"; silk "on the upgrade"). This is a very significant picture.

interests of the British bourgeoisie and the working class. This divorce first expresses itself in continual intensification of the economic struggle over wages, in more and more concentrated capitalist offensives, in more and more concentrated working class resistance. But this struggle inevitably develops a more and more revolutionary character: first because the enlargement of the economic struggle transforms it from an isolated struggle between one set of employers and a trade union into a struggle between the Government and the organised working class; second, because the economic conditions no longer allow the possibility of the old policy of concessions; the workers are, therefore, driven to more fundamental demands of nationalisation, the capital levy and the like; third, because the workers, as they become conscious of the new conditions, recognise their common interests with the international working class and the colonial workers against the imperialist bourgeoisie. All these conditions enlarge the scope of the workers' outlook and force them forward to the recognition of their struggle as the struggle of a class for power.

This process is the economic basis of "Revolutionisation." To this process there can be no limit within the existing structure of British capitalism. The divorce of interest henceforth increases instead of diminishing; it no longer admits of adjustment, but drives to revolutionary struggles.

For this reason the type of clash represented by Red Friday will inevitably recur on an intensified scale, until it reaches the stage of direct revolutionary and counter-revolutionary struggle.

Red Friday is, in consequence, not an isolated episode in the trade union struggle over wages, but a stage in an ascending series of the developing class struggle in Britain and a central landmark in the present process of Revolutionisation of the British working class.

## II. Red Friday.

During the present period the struggle in Britain has repeatedly centred around the miners. This was so in 1919, in 1920, in 1921 and again now in 1925.



This is because the new economic position of the industrial workers in Britain is most sharply and cruelly expressed in the condition of the miners. World conditions, changes in the sources of power, the development of new coal production outside Europe and particularly the working of Reparations coal and the Dawes Plan, have all combined to shatter the position of the British miners. At the outbreak of the crisis in 1925, one-third of the miners was unemployed. The miners have been thrown in a short space of years from the position of an aristocracy of labour to the position of a sweated trade. Hundreds of thousands were earning under £2 a week. Coincident with this there has taken place a revolution in outlook. Before the war the miners were traditionally on the Right-wing; they were the last to leave the old Liberal-Labour camp and the latest large section to join the Labour Party. Since the war the miners have become the revolutionary vanguard of the British working class. Thus the process of the proletarianisation of the British working class has been most clearly exemplified in the case of the miners.

In this way the miners have formed since the war the centre of the battle; the brunt of each successive capitalist attack has fallen upon them. From the point of view of the capitalists coal represented the key for cheapening all production. Thus the question of the wages of the miners has continuously been the crucial question of the position of the whole working class.

For a further reason the question of working class unity turns on the miners in the present period. The complete upsetting of economic conditions means that the miners have no longer the economic power that they had. Like the engineers, they are thrown by economic conditions into a position of extreme weakness. The most effective economic power in trade unionism to-day rests with the railwaymen and transport workers, who are able swiftly to hold up the process of production. It is, therefore, very important that the trade unions should stand together in their struggles in the present period, since their separate bargaining is for most sections heavily weakened.

It was for this reason that the desertion of the miners by the railwaymen (under the leadership of Thomas) in 1921 meant the heaviest setback in the post-war history of the working class movement.

After the defeats of 1921 and 1922 the working class went through a heavy period of depression. It was only slowly during 1923 that signs of recovery began and there was a renewal of the will to fight and win back some of the lost ground. During this period of depression the Communist Party did heavy work, at first almost alone, throughout the trade union movement to re-arouse the fighting spirit of the workers; the fruits of this were visible in the rapid development of the Minority Movement, which was started in the summer of 1924, and the strong establishment of Communist influence, despite small numbers, throughout every part of the trade union movement to-day. The growth of this influence may be partly seen in the following figures. In the beginning of 1923 the "Workers' Weekly" was started as the organ of the Party to carry on wider work among the masses, concentrating strongly on trade union work; this reached an immediate circulation of 50,000. In the summer of 1924 the First Conference of the Minority Movement gathered representatives of 270,000 workers in the trade unions. The Special Unity Conference of the Minority Movement in the beginning of 1925 gathered representatives of 600,000 workers. The Second Conference of the Minority Movement in August, 1925, gathered representatives of 750,000 workers. An important point in the growth of this influence was the election of A. J. Cook, the candidate of the Minority Movement, as Secretary of the Miners' Federation in the beginning of 1924.

The awakening of mass consciousness throughout 1924 and 1925 developed at an extremely rapid rate. The role of the Labour Government in relation to this awakening, the emergence of a Left-wing in the ranks of the trade union leadership, the influence of the delegation to Russia and the contact with the Russian workers, the campaign for International Trade Union Unity—all these played their part in this rapid development. Following upon the experience of the previous defeats and the long depression, they combined to produce a very much greater readiness for the coming crisis.

Thus by 1925 the capitalist offensive, which was renewed more drastically than ever before, had to deal with a considerably different working class than in 1921. The workers were actually putting in demands for wage increases in every principal industry and in each case directly on the initiative of the Party and the Minority Movement, which

were able by mass pressure to force their programmes upon the official trade union leadership. The capitalists replied with counter-demands for heavy reductions; particularly in the case of the miners the demands of the capitalists, reinforced eventually by the declaration of a lock-out for July 31st, were the most relentless. But this time the cry of unity was in the air and was very strong throughout the whole working class.

It is not possible for the purpose of this article to review the vicissitudes of the campaign for unity in reply to the capitalist offensive, which became the principal issue of the first half of 1925. The Communist slogan of a Workers' Alliance to meet the attack was at first pooh-poohed and only slowly won ground. But it is important to note the most characteristic difference which showed itself in 1925, as contrasted with 1921, and which is of decisive significance for the future. This difference lay in the fact that there existed in 1925 at any rate the elements of a central leadership in the trade union movement.

In 1921 there was the attempt to form a common front of the workers through the so-called "Triple Alliance" of the miners, railwaymen and transport workers. But this Alliance had no common leadership; it was brought together on the basis of a combination of sectional interests and in the hour of testing it broke down.

In 1925 there did exist a common leading body—the General Council. It is true that the General Council had still no powers for acting: the Communist campaign for the placing of the centralised powers of the whole movement in the hands of the General Council, pursued continuously over the past three years, was not yet successful; the campaign undoubtedly helped to build up the position of the General Council and the readiness to look to it for leadership. But the General Council did exist: by its Left leadership and its Unity Campaign it had won for itself a very great moral influence as the first element of a class leadership in the central organs of the British movement. And it is significant that the decisive influence in uniting the workers' ranks in the hour of crisis came from the General Council as representing the common interests of the whole movement.

For two months previous to the crisis there had been prolonged negotiations over the formation of a Workers'

Alliance of miners, railwaymen, engineers and transport workers. The Miners' Secretary, Cook, had from the inception of his office tirelessly devoted himself to cementing this common front. This campaign had great preparatory value; nevertheless the official delays of negotiation, especially in the face of much thinly-veiled opposition, were so long that it became clear that the Workers' Alliance, even if formed, would not function for the approaching crisis. It was at this point that the General Council took over direct leadership. The miners unreservedly placed themselves in the hands of the General Council.

The General Council on July 10th, issued the following statement:

"The General Council is confident it will have the backing of the whole organised trade union movement in placing itself without qualification and unreservedly at the disposal of the Miners' Federation to assist the Federation in any way possible."

On July 24th, on the summons of the General Council, a Special Trades Union Congress was held. The solidarity of the movement was declared behind the miners, but no effective decision was taken.

On July 25th, the General Council representatives met the railwaymen, whose support was the crucial question. Up to this point the support of the railwaymen was in doubt; their most prominent leaders (Thomas and Cramp) belonged to the extreme Right-wing and spoke in hostile terms of any strike action. But at this meeting the decision was taken that the railwaymen and transport workers (who were also represented) should give effective support by refusing to handle coal if the lock-out took place.

This was the turning point. From this point the Government was endeavouring to secure a settlement of the dispute. It is clear that the influence of the whole movement, represented through the General Council, was decisive in relation to the railwaymen. The following was the statement of the railwaymen's leader, Cramp, on the day after the decision:



"Yesterday when all the transport unions were invited to appear before the Special Committee of the Trades Union Congress General Council, it was proved to us that the miners were in a desperate position, that there was a possibility, nay a certainty—one might as well be brutally frank—that they could not carry on the struggle alone. The Railway Unions to-day are undoubtedly the most powerful in the country, where any general stoppage is concerned.

"This will be the nearest approach we have yet seen to a general industrial upheaval and no man can yet say what will be the ultimate outcome."

The following was the statement of Thomas :

"The situation has taken an entirely new turn. The unanimous decision of all the Railway Executives not to carry coal from the first hour of the stoppage means in my judgment absolute paralysis."

It is clear from these quotations that, through the direct intervention of the General Council, the common will of the movement had triumphed over the opposition to a United Front. This fact is of very great importance for the future of the working class struggle in Britain and demonstrates the absolute necessity of central leadership on a class basis.

The final crisis took place on July 30th. The Prime Minister, who still hoped for a break in the working class ranks at the last moment as in 1921, had declared, in the morning, that there could be no question of a subsidy (i.e., of avoiding the struggle, the subsidy being in effect a bribe to the owners to withdraw their notices). He declared roundly :

"All the workers of this country have got to face a reduction of wages. All the workers of this country have got to take reductions in wages to help put industry on its feet."

This declaration reinforced the solidarity of the working class ranks. In the morning the notices of instruction of the embargo on all coal were drawn up, signed directly by the General Council and countersigned by the officials of the railway and transport unions. The notice to the whole working class movement appeared on the front page of the

"Daily Herald" the following day. In the afternoon a special conference was held of the Executives of all the trade unions affiliated to the Trades Congress; this conference unanimously placed full executive powers over the whole movement in the hands of the General Council. The "Times" correspondent correctly described this as:

"A step more tremendous perhaps than any other combined trade union movement has taken . . . Such resolve and unanimity has not hitherto been known in an industrial dispute".

Within a few hours of this decision the Cabinet held a special meeting and reversed its policy, deciding in favour of the subsidy in order to postpone the conflict.

A settlement on these lines, establishing a nine month's truce on the basis of the status quo and providing for the appointment of a Royal Commission, was drawn up and finally agreed the following day.

This "settlement" was no settlement, but only a postponement. The workers had in fact won nothing save the temporary withdrawal of the lock-out notices. Many mining districts were indeed indignant that no attempt had been made to push forward their claims for a living wage and that the solidarity of the movement had only been used to accept a settlement which brought no positive gains.

Nevertheless the direct retreat of the Government before the united challenge of the trade union movement was a tremendous demonstration of working class power, which drove home a deep and lasting lesson. For the first time in four years the capitalist offensive had been checked and by the united action of the working class.

### III. The Policy of the Government.

Why did the Government retreat?

The reasons actuating the Government were stated quite plainly in a leading article of the "Times" the following day (the "Times" had for several days previously been urging a retreat upon the Government). The "Times" stated:

(1) "The whole trade union movement is backing the miners through the Trades Union Congress."

(2) "The owners apparently reckoned on the large existing stocks; but if the railwaymen and other transport workers refuse to move them, they might as well not exist for practical purposes."

(3) "Anyone who thinks that the impending struggle would pass without serious and extensive disorder can know very little of the temper that has been worked up, not only among miners, but all over the country in the industrial areas."

The Government retreated temporarily because the conditions were unfavourable for a decisive conflict. But the temporary retreat was consciously made only in order to prepare the ground for an effective and successful conflict with the whole forces of the working class movement in the near future. This was made perfectly clear in the statements of the Prime Minister and all the Government spokesmen directly after the settlement.

Immediately after the crisis the Government and the whole capitalist press made it clear that right on from this point every force would be concentrated on preparing a decisive and successful conflict, even to the use of the most extreme means.

The following is the statement of the Government view, according to the "Times" political correspondent:

"The majority of the Cabinet agreed that if it is inevitable (which they doubt) that sooner or later the forces of law and order must come into conflict with the executives of the trade unions, such a contest would inevitably be bitter and prolonged. If such an issue should ever have to be brought to a head, public opinion would have to be educated into a state of preparedness to accept the consequences." ("Times," 6-9-25).

The following is the statement of the Prime Minister:

"We were confronted by a great alliance of trade unions, who had the power and the will to inflict enormous and irreparable damage on their country. That is a grave menace. . . It is a very sad climax to the evolution of popular government that there should be men who have a great deal to gain, whatever they think, by progressive democracy, if they allow themselves to take a course right against everything for which demo-

crazy stands. I do not know if the policy which I describe is endorsed in all its implications by the whole of the Labour Party; but if that be so I do not see how constitutional government can live. . . . If the time should come when the community has to protect itself, with the full strength of the government behind it, the community will do so and the response of the community will astonish the forces of anarchy throughout the world." (House of Commons, 6-8-25. "Times" report, 7-8-25).

The following is the statement of the Home Secretary:

"He said to them, coming straight from the Cabinet Councils, the thing was not finished. The danger was not over. Sooner or later this question had got to be fought out by the people of the land. Was England to be governed by Parliament and by the Cabinet or by a handful of trade union leaders? If a Soviet were established here. . . a grave position would arise. On the other hand, if people were prepared to support the Government. . . . then he said quite frankly, quite seriously, there would be for a time grave trouble in the land, but if the heart of the people were sound, they could stand it." (Speech at Northampton, "Times," 3-8-25.)

The following is the statement of Mr. Churchill:

"In the event of a struggle, whatever its character might be, however ugly the episodes which marked it, he had no doubt that the national State would emerge victorious in spite of all rough and awkward corners that it might have to turn. But if they were going to embark on a struggle of this kind, let them be quite sure that decisive public opinion was behind them. . . . As the struggle widened and it became, as it must, a test whether the country was to be ruled by Parliament or by some sort of other organisation not responsible by our elective processes to the country as a whole—as that emerged, more and more and with every increase in the gravity of the issue, new resources of strength would have to come to the State and all sorts of action, which we now consider quite impossible, would just as in time of war, have been taken with general assent as a matter of course." (House of Commons, 6-8-25, "Times" report, 7-8-25.)



These are all statements of responsible Government spokesmen. Their meaning is perfectly clear and definite. They mean that the repetition of such a stand as the trade unions made on Red Friday will be regarded as war on the community and will be met by measures "just as in time of war."

The British working class movement will have to face the certainty of this issue.

An extensive campaign has been conducted in the capitalist press from the day of Red Friday to prepare for coming struggles of an extreme character. One or two typical statements may be given. The "Observer" writes under the title "Parliament or Soviet";

"The future of majority government and parliamentary control is henceforth a question which may dwarf even those of coal economics.

"The Government would be criminal if it did not from this moment prepare for the worst and compile its detailed registers for citizen service in emergency."

The "Weekly Dispatch" writes:

"Sooner or later there must come a definite trial of strength. We have no sort of doubt as to the result if we are prepared."

This press campaign has openly carried on propaganda for the use of military means, organisation of Fascism, etc.

Active preparations are being carried on by the Government. These include the organisation of special police (specified to be not trade unionists), directly under the War Office.

It is clear that the Government is endeavouring to concentrate its forces in the coming period on the class struggle at home. Coincident with this may be observed the attempt to reach settlements in the international field on the various pending issues, relative to France, Germany, debts, etc. Whether the intensification of the class struggle at home will postpone the attempted campaign against the Soviet Union remains to be seen.

One of the most important elements of the Government's preparations is undoubtedly the attempt to break up the unity of the working class movement. Here the treacherous policy of the existing Labour Party leadership plays into their hands. MacDonald's role during the crisis of Red Friday was one of ill-concealed antagonism to the united working class front; immediately after the settlement he delivered an attack upon the Tory Government for having yielded to the extremists in the working class movement—in this way showing himself more bourgeois than the bourgeoisie. MacDonald had already done service as an opponent of International Trade Union Unity and the Anglo-Russian Unity Campaign. The capitalist press propaganda made every possible use of this and endeavoured in every way to accentuate and intensify the division between the Labour Party and the trade unions. The Right-wing leadership which is at present dominant in the Labour Party, and still holds strong influence in the trade unions, although at present on the decline in these, will undoubtedly use all its endeavours to prevent the continuance and development of the working class united front and the passing of Thomas on to the General Council is a token of this. Against this danger the working class movement will need to be on its guard.

#### **IV. The Working Class Movement after Red Friday.**

A very great impetus to the working class movement was given by the effect of Red Friday—an impetus to renewed confidence and will to fight, to stronger class consciousness and a wider outlook, to sharpened attention for the new problems in front.

This impetus was mostly clearly seen at the Scarborough Trades Union Congress in September. It was expected that this Congress would have in any case approved the line of the General Council on International Trade Union Unity. But that the agenda of the Conference should be most prominently occupied with resolutions directly emanating from the initiative of the Party and the Minority Movement (acting through the trade union channels) and that one after another of these resolutions should be adopted by overwhelming majorities against the open Right-wing opposition—this was a revelation of the rate of change taking place. Most significant of these resolutions were (1) the resolution of International Trade Union Unity instructing the General Council to work for the creation of a new all-inclusive Trade Union

International; (2) the resolution condemning and repudiating the Dawes Plan; (3) the resolution declaring the right of self-determination, including the right of secession, for all parts of the Empire; (4) the resolution urging the establishment of Factory Committees as a means to prosecuting the trade unions' task, in conjunction with the Party of the workers, of the overthrow of capitalism. All these resolutions were directly Communist in inspiration and were overwhelmingly adopted. The question of power to the General Council was not decided at the Congress, but remitted to the new General Council to take up in order that a scheme might be adopted by the next Congress.

This striking move to the Left on the part of the trade unions, now so strongly confirmed by the Congress, raised at once acute questions within the working class movement. The policy of the Trades Union Congress now stands in direct opposition to the present official policy of the Labour Party, both in the general affirmation of the class struggle as the means to the overthrow of capitalism and in important particular questions, such as the Dawes Report, the Empire and the United Front with the Communists. In consequence the question of possible “splits” between the trade unions and the Labour Party was widely raised and met by repeated affirmations of the closest co-operation and unity between the “industrial” and “political” wings of the movement.

As the question of the trade unions and the Labour Party will undoubtedly play an important role in the immediate future, it will be worth while to examine it a little more closely. It is inevitable that the sharpening of the class struggle, as contrasted to the policy of increasingly open class co-operation of the Labour Party leadership, should raise acute issues. But this issue, as commonly expressed to lie between the “industrial” and “political” wings of the movement is a false one; it is very important for the future of the movement that the real issue which it conceals should be clearly brought out. Fundamentally there can, of course, be no divergence between the mass of the trade unions and the mass of the Labour Party: since the trade unions are the Labour Party. But there can and inevitably will be greater and greater divergence between a leadership which is approaching more and more full recognition of the class struggle and a leadership which directly denies the class struggle. Now this is the process which is actually within the movement—not in the sense of the leadership of two

wings, but in the sense of two political leaderships. The General Council is temporarily occupying the role in fact of an alternative political leadership (this was most clearly seen in the China crisis). There are friends and enemies of the class struggle in both camps; but at the present moment the friends predominate in the General Council and the enemies predominate in the Labour Party E.C. Thus what is in reality a primary political issue for the whole movement, the issue of the class struggle, appears as an issue between two wings of the movement, the industrial and the political. But to present the issue in this way, to appeal for the "co-operation of the industrial and political wings" as the line of solution, is simply a piece of Right-wing tactics to confuse the real issue which must be faced. The issue of the class struggle must be fought out and settled both in the trade unions and in the Labour Party; only so can the effective unity of the movement be re-established.

Why has the issue of the class struggle emerged first in the trade unions rather than in the Labour Party? To anyone recognising the character of the English working class movement, which is rooted in the trade unions, with the Labour Party as at first only a Parliamentary outgrowth, the answer is clear. The trade unions are of necessity closer to the daily struggle of the workers; the Labour Party leadership is heavily dominated by the bourgeois Parliamentary tradition and by the coalition between the proletariat and the petty bourgeois on the "democratic" basis of Parliament which is represented in the Labour Party. Up to a few years ago both the Labour Party and the trade unions were to all appearances established on the basis of class harmony: the mild radical excursions of the petty bourgeoisie within the Labour Party (represented by the Independent Labour Party) might easily appear as the "progressive" element in contrast to the solid "conservatism" of the trade unions. But as soon as a change of conditions brings a real emergence and intensification of class struggle in Britain, it is natural that the class struggle, revealing itself first in its primitive economic forms without relation to political consciousness, should meet with heavy opposition and obstruction within the Labour Party, where the petty bourgeois elements (the I.L.P.) are now revealed in their reactionary and even counter-revolutionary role, but must eventually win its way forward, within the ranks of the Labour Party, as political consciousness grows. Thus the alleged issue between the trade unions and the Labour Party is only an early form of the development of consciousness of the class struggle in Britain.



The development of events has brought out in a sharp form the issue of the class struggle in Britain. The immediate effect of Red Friday was to fix attention on the coming struggle and to raise even suggestions of possible revolutionary issues. The language of the press and the Government, who repeatedly proclaimed the future issue of "Parliament or Soviet" with very great clearness and on a scale of publicity far beyond the reach of the Party, did much to help to spread a conception of possible big issues. Many trade union leaders spoke in revolutionary terms. The following is a characteristic statement from a speech by Cook after the crisis:

"Revolutions will come. I want a revolution that will have not only a disciplined army, but an objective before it, a revolution that will understand its goal."  
("Sunday Worker," 23-8-25.)

The Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, Swales, concluded his address with the following passage:

"We are entering upon a new phase of development in the upward struggles of our class. All around are signs of an awakening consciousness in the peoples of all countries that the present system of society is condemned.

"The new phase of development which is world-wide has entered upon the next and probably the last stage of revolt.

"It is the duty of all members of the working class so to solidify their movements, that, come when the time may for the last final struggle, we shall be wanting in neither machinery nor men to move forward to the destruction of wage-slavery and the construction of a new system of society based upon co-ordinated effort and work with mutual goodwill and understanding."

These statements are significant indications of the trend of feeling among large bodies of workers.

The principal pre-occupation of the working class movement as a whole was with the possibilities of the expected approaching conflict at the end of the truce. The provocative language and visible preparations of the Government sharpened the consciousness of the movement. What did the future hold in store? How were the possible dangers to be met?

The nine months' truce was universally recognised as only a postponement of the struggle and attention became widely fixed on the question of the renewal of the conflict expected to take place at the conclusion of the truce—May Day next year. There was general expectation of a very widespread industrial conflict to open then, for which the trade union movement would need to prepare. In consequence the question of commissariat preparation was seriously taken up.

But at this point a new issue has begun to enter into the consciousness of the movement—the issue of military force. The language and preparations of the Government throw out very plain suggestions of the use of military force in the event of a general strike movement. This possibility began to be canvassed in speeches and agitation.

In the House of Commons, Purcell declared plainly in response to the Government's provocation:

“I do not think we shall flinch from our duty, which is to our class first, in order to see that they are well protected and guarded. Trade unionists will not be deterred.”

The ex-Minister, Wheatley, raised a campaign on the probability of the use of military force by the Government and the necessity of enrolling a “Workers' Defence Corps” of ten million men. Wheatley wrote:

“The soldiers and police will be drilled to keep the locked-out mob in order while starvation forces them to subjection. And the workers, because they are Britons and not a servile Eastern race, will prepare to meet the onslaught.

“If working class soldiers can be relied on to shoot down working class strikers, capitalism will get a new lease of life by making Britain a land of coolies. If the working class soldiers should fail, then all is lost for capitalism. One thing is clear as noonday. For the next nine months the workers must prepare on a new scale and on new lines for the greatest struggle in their history.”

And with regard to his proposed "Workers' Defence Corps," he wrote:

"We want 10,000,000 men, men who are prepared to suffer rather than see Britain made a land of coolies. . . . Your class and country want you."

The chairman of the Trades Union Congress, Swales, supported Wheatley's appeal for ten million men.

This talk raised controversy. Prominent articles appeared in the "Daily Herald" directly countering Wheatley's propaganda, under such titles as "Shall the Workers Arm?" and adducing "practical" and "moral" arguments against the use of arms. Wheatley replied by declaring that he meant the enrolment of ten million trade unionists and that it was probable the working class would not be content to turn the other cheek.

In the midst of this gathering controversy, at its outset, the Communist Party intervened with an Open Letter to the Labour Party Executive and the General Council. The Open Letter raised the question of the use of soldiers against the workers by the Government, quoting the statement of Wheatley and calling on the Labour Party and the General Council to "enlighten the rank and file of the forces" by the issue of an official manifesto to the soldiers and sailors to counter the capitalist propaganda in their midst.

This Open Letter confined itself to a single practical task of definite revolutionary import—working class propaganda among the soldiers—to which the most "pacifist" could raise no objection. The immediate response in the leading ranks of the movement to this was curious and revealing. Not only the whole Right-wing, in unison with the capitalist press, but even some of the leaders inclining to the Left, attacked the Letter as an incitement to "violent revolution."

It is important to note that the Trades Union Congress did not attempt to discuss directly the past crisis or the approaching struggles.

It is clear that there is very great danger of the movement entering heavily unprepared into the coming struggle and encountering in consequence serious and heavy defeats. The danger of this, and of the consequent depression, is the

most urgent danger now in front of the further progress of the movement: the task of propaganda and preparation for the approaching struggles is the most immediately important revolutionary task.

### V. The Lessons of Red Friday.

The first lesson of Red Friday is undoubtedly the lesson of the power of working class solidarity, the assertion of working class will. This is the most important lesson of all. The combined experience of Black Friday and Red Friday should have driven the consciousness of this and its meaning deep into the minds of all the workers.

But Red Friday itself is only a stage in the learning of this lesson. It is the experience of the power of common will and solidarity; but it is not yet the experience of common action. There has not yet been any actual experience of a general strike movement. Therefore, the most important lesson of all, the experience of the common fight, has still to come. It would, therefore, be premature to build too much on the solidarity of Red Friday as yet firmly won. It is a fortunate achievement through a happy combination of circumstances: but heavy preparation and propaganda are still needed before the solidarity that was then shown can be counted on with confidence in future crises.

The second lesson of Red Friday is, therefore, the necessity of effective immediate preparations for the certainty of future struggles. If the present revival of working class consciousness were to meet with a new and heavy defeat, which was manifestly due to lack of serious preparations and forethought, there would be an extreme danger of a very heavy depression. This is all the more the case, as the tendency in current propaganda is to fix exclusively on the crisis expected to follow after the conclusion of the truce, to the exclusion of any wider perspective or, alternatively, the possibility of a more rapid conflict.

For this reason the first task of preparation is to present clearly to the working class the future issue. It is necessary to draw the lesson from the present situation in order to show—

(1) the certainty of future struggles, not necessarily at a particular date or on a particular issue, but

over the whole approaching period, arising out of the confrontation of class forces and the economic situation ;

(2) the impossibility of the British workers finding any solution from their present position or protection against worsening conditions within the existing economic situation and, therefore, the necessity of carrying forward the struggle to its only possible outcome in the conquest of industry by the working class ;

(3) the consequent necessity for the working class to take power in their own hands ;

(4) the necessity of expecting the Government and the bourgeoisie to make use of every possible means in the struggle and the folly of trusting in the supposed protection of parliament, democracy and legality and the necessity of the working class looking to themselves alone for their protection ;

(5) the necessity for the workers, in view of the above, to prepare for a period of developing struggles, involving both defeats and victories, up to the ultimate struggle for power.

A campaign of agitation throughout the country is the first necessity. The widest possible masses must be awakened to the coming struggles. The slogan of Unity, national and international, must be universally spread. At the same time conferences of working class organisations to discuss the coming issues need to be held in every locality. Only by the widest agitation and propaganda can a strong basis of mass solidarity and preparedness be built up.

The second task of preparation is the task of practical preparations for the coming struggles.

Trade union organisation needs to be strengthened and recruited. After the demonstration of Red Friday a campaign to sweep the workers into the unions should reap a rich harvest.

At the same time it is necessary to recognise that the existing trade union machinery is not sufficient for the needs of mass action. How are the workers, without either experience or machinery of common action, to come out together when the time comes? Unification is necessary, not



only at the centre, but throughout the working class. This can only be achieved on one basis—the Factory Committees. The last Trades Union Congress has approved the necessity for the establishment of Factory Committees for the conduct of the battle against capitalism. This resolution needs to be made a reality, with the full force of the movement behind the effort to bring it into effect.

The establishment of a network of Factory Committees is the most important practical preparation for the struggles immediately ahead.

At the same time, both locally and centrally, the organs of the common struggle must be ready. It is necessary to establish common bodies of the whole movement, representative of all working class organisations, trade union, political and co-operative, in every district and locality, which can act as agitation committees.

Finally it is necessary to organise the Workers' Defence bodies and conduct in the name of the whole official Labour Movement propaganda to the soldiers and sailors.

In this period, more than ever before, the task of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement assumes very great dimensions both in the campaign of agitation and propaganda and in the maintenance of a firm revolutionary line through every phase of the developing struggle. In this process the role of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement should become increasingly clear to the masses, leading to very great strengthening in numbers and influence and a rapid advance to the mass Party.

Red Friday has opened a contest which will rapidly reach further stages. The present moment is the moment for intensive preparation.

R. PALME DUTT.

# Book Reviews

## “FINANCIAL POLICY OF THE REVOLUTION”

by G. J. Sokolnikov

(Finance Publishing House of U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1925. Vol. I, 298 pp.)

**T**HE process of restoring the national economy of Soviet Russia is coming to an end. The cornerstone of the economic foundation on which the alliance between proletariat and peasantry will repose has already been laid. Soviet finance, which is one of the most important “levers in our Socialist construction” (Foreword to the book under review), has been put on a sound basis. The offshoots of Socialism, scattered throughout the immense Soviet country, are growing higher and higher. We are approaching at full speed the threshold of an epoch when it will not be possible to restrict ourselves to restoration, but when it will be necessary to construct the entire economic system of the Soviet Union on new lines. This means we must change it not only in **quantity**, but first and foremost in **quality**. We must change the entire basis on which this system reposes, rearrange the various interrelations, move on the centre of gravity from one branch of national economy to another, from one branch of industry to another, change the nature of connections with the world market, the connections of the organised Socialist elements of our economy with the primitive trading of the small producers.

But whereas in a number of branches of Soviet economy these are still problems of the morrow, finance has already now encountered the necessity of solving the most complicated problems; without this all further progress would be unthinkable and any sort of schematic economic construction would be out of the question. Of these problems it will suffice to consider financial relations with capitalist world economy which exact especially complicated and difficult tasks—the formation of a single internal money market, based on a sound and stable currency, a strong and elastic credit apparatus, the development of State credit, construction and strengthening of local budgets, etc. These are all **tasks of to-day** which demand an immediate solution. But

in their wake in the near future new problems will crop up which will be no less complicated. Their contour can already be more and more clearly defined.

At the threshold of a new epoch it is necessary to survey the results of the path already traversed, in order to be able to examine and utilise the experience accumulated. It is necessary to see that the financial processes of the Great Russian Revolution develop according to definite laws, so as to be able to wield this mighty "financial lever" and to learn to act with it. This is necessary for the entire young generation of workers who are engulfed in or are beginning to tackle the process of constructing Soviet finance; it is especially necessary in view of the struggle against obstacles which crop up every moment in their daily work. A study and investigation of the history of our financial policy during the last eight years is of primary importance. Up to the present we have undertaken no such investigation. Finally, however, the most valuable material for the scientific investigation of the financial history of the revolution has appeared in a form accessible to all. This material first saw the light in the very thick of the struggle and has been compiled by one of the most prominent leaders of Soviet financial policy, one of the creators of the Soviet financial system.

The reason for comrade Sokolnikov's book being of such exceptional interest lies to a large extent in the fact that the articles and reports contained in the book have not come from the pen of a historian standing aside from the course of events, or isolated from the seething struggle, but have been dictated by the demands of this struggle, have constituted a weapon in the hands of a fighter who had all the time stood at a forward post. Therein lies their interest and their peculiar charm.

The theses "For the Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P." written by the author and covering the 1918-1922 period, which were subsequently accepted with repeated amendments of the Congress (p. 135 and following pages), occupy an important portion of the book. "Under the new conditions both the State-administrative and State economic demands are assured more and more by means of the market, i.e., through money." From this main conception, conclusions are then drawn with regard to the currency reform, budget and tax policy, credit. Around these theses, which form the basis of the "new financial policy" a number of reports are

grouped with the report to the Eleventh Party Congress at the head. (p. 139 and the following pages). The Soviet State and the Party had then arrived at the end of the path they had pursued in order to establish the financial system on a sound basis. The author, in his Congress report, outlined the coming tasks in the following manner: "Reduction of State budget, development of local budget, development of system of local taxes, development of system of State income, all possible reductions from the State budget in the field of industry, the assessment of industry which should bring definite resources to the State, the development of a system of lease concessions and mixed societies, which will guarantee the development of productive forces and enable us to utilise foreign capital." (p. 153.) All this, side by side with the task of introducing currency reform and restoring the system of State and bank credit, to which the author frequently refers, comprises the financial programme of the revolution. "I ask you to set us this task of building up Soviet currency and Soviet finance, just as we at one time were able to build up the Red Army"—said comrade Sokolnikov at the Tenth Congress of Soviets. "At the present time a further move ahead in the direction of strengthening finance and improving our currency has as much importance for us in international relations as the victory of the Red Army had in its time." (p. 201.)

The struggle for Soviet currency and Soviet finance was at that time already on the road to victory. However, during those years it was also necessary to conduct a struggle not only against petty bourgeois elements within our country, against the collapse of the entire economy of the Union, but struggle had also to be conducted in the theoretical field, against the lack of understanding of the main tasks of the new economic and financial policy and against the partisans and romanticists of "Military Communism," against the authors of all kinds of fantastic projects for improving the financial system and the currency. In those days we still had to prove that "during the transition epoch (and by transition epoch we understand an entire phase of historical development) when unorganised trading continues to exist as a factor of most considerable economic power side by side with organised Socialist economy, money is necessary and inevitable and the task of the economic and financial policy of the proletariat is to become master of the economic money market to the largest possible extent, i.e., to command the currency, despite the commodity nature of money." (p. 8-9.)

It is hardly worth while mentioning that this interpretation of the tasks of economic and financial policy of the proletariat has won all along the line. There is also no need to emphasise that armed with a clear understanding of the tasks before it, the proletariat will march from victory to victory on its financial front of struggle. Despite everything, it has been able with superhuman efforts to "create a red financial system, to enter the arena in the capitalist system of financial technique formed by the capitalists themselves and to guarantee the preservation and development of the Soviet system in Russia during the transition epoch as the beginnings of a world organisation of Socialism." (p. 11.)

It would be futile to attempt to present the entire wealthy contents of comrade Sokolnikov's book in a review. This book must be read, it must be studied and the Bolshevik method of the financial policy of the Revolution should be learned therefrom.

S. KLONOVITZ.





## FROM THE ROUMANIAN TORTURE-CHAMBER :

Documents and Revelations of the crime of the Roumanian  
"Siguranza."

(*Cultural-Political Publishing House, Vienna. 88 pp*).

**T**HIS small pamphlet, too small in proportion to the "civilised methods" of the Roumanian police, was published in Bucharest by the 70-year-old barrister and journalist, Kosta Foru, at present general secretary of the League of the Rights of Man in Roumania. Kosta Foru has dared this because he is an exception in the ranks of the ruling class of Roumania; he is a relic of the old conservative party and opponent of every "revolution," of any changes in the economic and social life, but an upholder of the law. Kosta Foru is a reactionary but an "honest" reactionary ready to defend "Democracy" and the "laws" of the Liberal Constitution in so far as "they have been put into force."

The pamphlet was published at first in the Roumanian language in the Spring of 1925, but the "Independent" and "Democratic" press of Roumania did not pay much heed to it. It is only to-day, when the pamphlet has already appeared in German (and will probably appear to-morrow in French and English\*) that they howl like wild beasts.

The government organ "Viituroi" of August 21st, 1925, calls the pamphlet, which deals with "alleged methods of torture," "a shame and high treason," and even endeavours to refute the signed testimony with the following ironical remarks: "Our dreadful police has not exterminated the people," and "Herr Kosta Foru can still parade the streets of Bucharest unhampered," and these remarks as they go on become more concrete.

"There are instances," writes the same paper, "like that of this **go-between**, Kosta Foru, which cannot be tolerated and when the extreme **benevolence** of the authorities to-

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\* The I.C.W.P.A. (British Section) has already issued in English a pamphlet on the Tatar-Bunar rising and the Roumanian Terror entitled "Bessarabia."

wards a person who is a tool of the enemies of this country has exceeded all limits."

In modern Roumania, a country in a perpetual state of siege and permanent courts-martial and censorship, Kosta Foru's action is all the more significant.

Kosta Foru is, of course, represented now as the "Agent of the Bolsheviks" and measures against him have been suggested to the authorities.

The old patriot, who even went to the front as a "volunteer" is now called an "Internationalist" and "Anti-Nationalist" just because he dared to write against conditions, "the like of which can only be found in Darkest Africa."

And now as to the pamphlet itself.

At the end of 1924 when the Communist Party of Roumania, which was driven underground, "nevertheless dared" to take a definite stand on the questions of the day and to disseminate throughout Greater Roumania illegal leaflets on "The Rising in Tatar-Bunar," and on the "Conditions of the Working Class in Roumania," the Roumanian government got wild. And because the police and the "Siguranza" (the Secret Intelligence Department, a department of the Ministry of the Interior which for the sake of blackmail goes the length of organising assassinations, "discovering" them before their completion and spies even on every member of the Royal family) were not able to "catch" the distributors of the leaflets red-handed, mass arrests have been the order of the day: about 800 in all.

The 70 written statements contained in the pamphlet are thus only a fragment of the tortures carried out at the end of December, 1924, and at the beginning of January, 1925 throughout Roumania. That most of the victims of these mass arrests were innocent people is shown alone by the fact that after a "short" application of the "civilised methods of the Roumanian police," 750 out of the 800 were set free.

The others were tried and these trials have become known throughout the world because of the prolonged hunger strikes (up to 37 days).

The statements were first of all examined by Kosta Foru himself. Having convinced himself of their correctness

he was induced to publish the pamphlet and to write for it an introduction and a summary which is an indictment, on behalf of the League of the Rights of Man, of the police and the government "which tolerates everything" and in which he demands "strict" investigation on the part of the "judge" and "punishment" of the "culprits."

To get a clear picture of the tortures one should, of course, read the pamphlet. Here I will only enumerate the "civilised methods" applied by the "Siguranza" against the arrested people, be they young or old, men or women:

"The whip, the rubber stick, hair torn out by the roots, kicking and beating with fists, with the rubber cat-o'-nine-tails, kicking head and chest, striking the face for hours with rubber whips, holding the muzzle of a revolver to the temple, kicking the stomach, driving bits of wood under the finger nails, threats "to throw into the well," "to hang according to the Bessarabian method," tying people back to back, flogging with a wet cable, belabouring with chains, the butt-end of rifles, clubs, iron rods, making people stand up motionless for days face to the wall, depriving them of meals, boxes on the ear, stocks, etc."

The 70 who made the statements had to go through all this. In the summary of the pamphlet Kosta Foru mentions the following "refined torture": "Binding the arms behind the back with thick cord till the bones cracked (in the town of Brassow); crushing the fingers in stocks (in Arad), which made the victims lose consciousness and caused blood to flow from mouth and nose . . . To intimidate the husband, **his wife was ill-treated before his eyes.** Fathers were taken home **and beaten in the presence of their children.** . . . Workers and students, working women and women students, young girls (**as a rule minors**) were beaten with rubber whips, dragged by the hair and had their shins, body and head struck with clubs" (See pamphlet, p. 84, German edition).

These tortures generally took place at midnight, were kept up four, six and even seven hours consecutively, and were repeated four to five times. As blood was flowing from mouth and nose the victims had cold water thrown on them in order "to revive" them so that the tortures could be renewed.

Dodan Vasile was beaten for 12 consecutive hours (pamphlet, p. 22, German edition).

The tortures were always carried out by four to five agents, by commissars, police inspectors, **doctors** and even in the presence of the **Roumanian Consul** in Wien—Radoj.

Elena Filippocitsch, formerly secretary of the Youth League, gives the following description of the whip: "It is a piece of motor-car tyre made into a whip of three tails. It is used because it does not lacerate the skin but only hurts dreadfully and leaves blue marks." (See pamphlet, p. 89, German edition.)

The working man, Csesa Goresk from Arad **went mad** as a result of the torturing and Thot Istwan committed suicide.

These tortures were inflicted for the purpose of extorting admissions that the respective people were Communists, that they know Communists, that they have distributed leaflets, are connected with Moscow, etc., and for the purpose of forcing them to sign declarations drawn up by the police themselves, in order to build up an indictment on the strength of these "documents," or, as this has happened in August, 1925, to manufacture "Zinoviev letters."

This pamphlet also shows what treatment "the new provinces" received from the "mother country." The people who were tortured were all of them from Transylvania, Bessarabia, the Banat and Bukovina. Those of Old Roumania were "spared." They were only made to undergo moral tortures, they were only driven to hunger strikes which frequently proved fatal; every now and then they were treated to boxes on the ear, but they were not treated as slaves.

The pamphlet is a historical landmark. This is a good beginning. In spite of miserable conditions and defeats, the young revolutionists of Roumania dare offer open resistance; it is no joke in the Boyar country to publish written revelations whilst still behind lock and key. It is a good beginning which is directly connected with the progress of the young C.P. of Roumania.

AL. BADULESCU.



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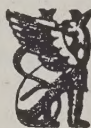
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